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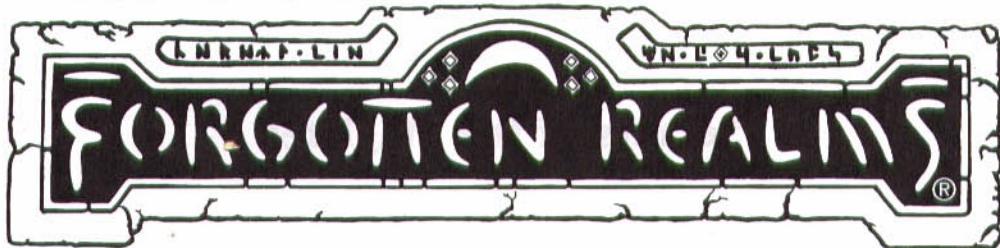


Secrets of the Magister



Ed Greenwood

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®



Secrets of The Magister

Ed Greenwood

"Of old, the mouths of Mystra made known to all who have Power, that by the blessing of the goddess, one mage shall be the Lady's champion, and master of imagery. This one, called the Magister, does not rule, but rather wanders the Realms doing as desired, for good or ill, and in time is cast down by other mages, and the mouths of Mystra shall name a new Magister. Thus the Art shall live and grow, in strife and mystery, and never know the stifling yoke of law nor of authority. And the Art shall grow stronger, for magely ambition grows with skill-in-Art, and those waxing stronger will seek out incumbent weakness; from strife-of-art shall come greater strength. In the proper choosing of an enemy, each Magister brings glory, and greater strength, to the office. And in the seeking of that office, each magic brings glory, and greater strength, to the Art."

—Albaerum of Neverwinter, Sage
The Wonders of Magery

" 'Tis a lonely thing, to be Magister. All shadows have eyes. Death is never far off, and often charges at one. 'Tis not an office for the faint of heart."

—Almer Galarthund
Thoughts Before My Slaying

"He will be Magister. I know. I have seen the fire in his eyes."

—The character, Ferlinus Fooldark, in the play
Hearts and Daggers for Them
by Sperrus of Athkatla



Credits/Dedication

Secrets of the Magister

Credits

Designer: Ed Greenwood
Editor: Dale Donovan with Kim Mohan
Cover Artist: Fred Fields
Interior Artist: David Day
Typesetters: Eric Haddock and Angelika Lokotz
Graphic Designer: Tanya Matson
Creative Director: Stan!
Art Director: Paul Hanchette

Dedication

To Julia Martin, who has served the Realms so long and well—and made a difference.

Thanks are due all who contributed ideas and desires about the Magister, in particular Eric L. Boyd, Grant Christie, Bryan Fields, George Krashos, Julia Martin, Bobby Nichols, Steven Schend, Craig Sefton, and Bryon Wischstadt.

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U.S., CANADA, ASIA
PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton WA 98057-0707
(Questions?) 1-800-324-6496



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EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 2031
2600 Berchem
Belgium
+32-70-23-32-77

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The Magister of Mystra

Few beings in the Realms are so misunderstood, despite numerous ballads, tales, and legends, as the long line of mysterious wizards who have held the title of "the Magister."

Most civilized Faerûnians know that the Magister is some sort of specially anointed (by Mystra, the goddess of magic) wizard, has special powers, and there is only one at a time, a new Magister assuming the office when the current one is slain (usually by the successor).

The moment inquiry moves beyond these bare ideas, the disagreements begin. Opinions are so varied as to swamp any single tome, if set down in full; suffice it to say that sharply conflicting views about the Magister continue to be hotly contested to this day.

Access to both Elminster and Laeral allows us to state much more, and the results of the lore they have imparted appear in this book. Some of the Chosen of Mystra promote the belief that to understand the Magister is to learn what true mastery of magic is, and therefore, what every wizard should strive for.

Briefly, the Magister is the personal champion of Mystra, but this does not mean "someone who fights for Mystra," in the way a warrior fights for his liege lord. The mightiest deity of the Realms, capable of personally controlling all access to the Weave (the magical energies and bindings that flow in unending life around Toril), hardly needs another wizard to hurl spells on her behalf. Rather, the office exists to promote "the Art" (wizardly magic) throughout the Realms, both through the tasks individual Magisters are charged with, and by the striving toward greater mastery of magic that competition for the office causes.

Those raised in competitive, magic-strong societies (such as Thay, for example) see the office as a means of "becoming the mightiest wizard of all Faerûn," using its special powers to slay old foes and potential rivals. Yet even brief reflection upon the magic-nurturing nature of the Mother of All Magic reveals to the thinking Faerûnian that the view of the office as "the hammer to all other mages' anvils" must be mistaken.

This book sets forth what it is to be the Magister, from the creation of the office after the Dawn Cataclysm by Mystra, wherein Azuth (the same Azuth who later rose to godhood) became the first Magister, down the long years to the present time. Students of Realmslore will find no exhaustive list of all the Magisters herein, for only Mystra knows the entire roster. Nor does this tome attempt to address all the unique magic employed by Magisters, for a library the size of that at Candlekeep would be needed to address such a topic. However, players and Dungeon Masters alike can glean much from these pages about the most important mortal mages of Faerûn to use them in play.

A Note about Terms

A successful career as a Magister is all about its holder exhibiting good judgment, but there is no other connection between the Magister of Mystra and the many judges (pronouncers-of-laws or criminal sentences) found in various cities of Faerûn, including Suzail and Waterdeep, who hold the title "Magister." Nor are the Lords Magister ("Just Lords") of Waterdeep's past connected to the champion of Mystra.

Sigils of the Magisters

The personal symbols of various Magisters appear throughout this book, and rarely vary much from those used by these mages before each became the Magister.

There also exists, however, a sigil pertaining to the office and usable by any Magister. (Other mortals who employ it—drawing it in any permanent manner, as opposed to tracing its outlines for a few seconds in ashes or sand—are either *feebled-minded* or struck blind, by the grace of Mystra, for at least a tenday, depending on their intentions when falsely using the sigil). It appears below and at the top of each page of this book. When rendered in color, it customarily appears as stars of alternating white and silver on a field of deep blue. The stars on both ends of the array are silver.



Tasks of the Magister



Mhile the office has no formal, written rules and responsibilities, various Magisters have been charged with specific missions (and placed under particular prohibitions) by Mystra. All Magisters soon come to learn, one way or another, that they have duties to accompany their powers. These responsibilities vary over time, and are a private matter between Mystra, Azuth, and the incumbent Magister, but can in general be said to follow certain principles.

Magisters never repair or maintain the Weave (dealing with "wild" or "dead" magic areas, for example) except when charged to do so by Mystra, Azuth, or a Chosen.

Magisters receive no salary, territory, stronghold, or secular authority, and are strongly advised to keep clear of politics.

Magisters should pursue personal goals of crafting new magic, but also should hold themselves aloof from considerations of good and evil among mages and magic use, considering instead the primary goal of their office: to encourage the ever-wider use of magic in Faerûn, and to promote its availability and utility.

Fearful of attack, many Magisters become reclusive, skulking figures, suspicious of all beings who approach them, while others travel Faerûn ceaselessly, spending their days seeing and doing. The ways in which wizards fulfill the office vary widely, but Mystra ensures that their actions are always useful in the drive to constantly further magic.

The office itself keeps some glory-minded mages from wantonly smashing towers, mountains, realms, and their fellow creatures by giving them another goal to strive toward: the goal of becoming the "Supreme Mage." So the office serves as a valve for rebelliousness, arrogance, independence, and the need for personal achievement among such-minded mages.

Some love the powers of the office, and some misuse them; Mystra sees to it that the latter do not last long. One power known to many wizards is the Magister's ability to temporarily ban spells Toril-wide (discussed in the "Powers of the Magister" section). What few wizards choose to believe is that all uses of a Magister's powers must be in accordance with the underlying mission of the office: to spread and promote the use of magic.

A Magister's rise in experience level while in office is in direct proportion to the new magic he devises and gives away to others, and encourages others to develop on their own. Magic that feeds on or dominates other magic (such as the spells *dispel magic* and *spell engine*, wild magic effects, or the like) is the only exception to this rule.

That's not to say a Magister facing attack from a powerful archmage must aid that wizard by giving him more magic—in fact, the cause of spreading magic use is almost always best served by taking magic from those strong in it, and giving it to those of lesser accomplishments (who

are more likely to use it, rather than hoard it to constrain others from magic use). Within this prime mission of the office, there remains a lot of room for Magisters who revel in spell-battle to hurl magic that humbles or awes onlookers with its effects. One Magister (Kurtal of Sreve) blasted a rival wizard's crumbling tower with magic that froze the tumbling stones forever in a shattered arc of stone, halfway through their fall—as an ever-present lesson to the locals of the might of magic.

Natural arrogance may lead certain Magisters into political dabblings and public pronouncements, souring their relationships with others (even the deity they serve), but in general, Magisters deal with the rest of the world as follows.

To most folk, the Magister is but a name and a set of colorful stories; one is seen in the flesh only rarely. To other mages, the Magister is a wary, elusive dispenser of useful magic and a careful observer of events. Commoners, mages, and clergy of faiths not close to the deity of magic may aid, flee from, or attack the Magister out of fear, but only the few Magisters who love to see fear in the eyes of others customarily reveal their office when dealing with such individuals.

The Heralds respect the office of the Magister, and some Magisters deliver fragmentary notices or reports of important magical events. To many rulers, the Harpers, and most other organizations with far-reaching interests, the Magister usually remains invisible, avoiding these groups when possible, and disappearing when his presence is revealed.

To the churches of Mystra and Azuth, the Magister is a figure to be welcomed and assisted when he appears (and proves his identity by use of the sigil of the Magister).

The clergy of Savras and Velsharoon are unfriendly to the Magister, and their deities seldom have dealings with the champion of Mystra—but they also seem to fear the Magister to varying degrees, and so many simply ignore him, as they do the Chosen of Mystra.

The servants of Savras the All-Seeing One believe that the independence of the office is unwise, and not to be encouraged. (However, a sorely wounded Magister found by Savrathans will be kept alive, even healed as much as possible, and taken to clergy of Mystra or Azuth as promptly as possible.)

The clergy of Velsharoon the Vaunted seek to bind or disable, but not slay, Magisters who come within their reach, and imprison any Magister they defeat in dark crypts, usually chained (with manacles that bear harmful or magic-inhibiting enchantments) and drugged to prevent spell use. Thus they demonstrate the power of the Velsharan faith, and the "rightful rise of his power over Mystra, the Empty Glory." Mystra has caused imprisoned Magisters to burst free under



Tasks of the Magister



such circumstances, and even to shatter crypts and accompanying temples when unwise Velsharan clergy tried to bring a Magister under their power by transforming their captive into an undead.

The relationships of individual Magisters to Mystra, her Chosen, and to Azuth depend in large part on the character and particularly the arrogance (if any) of the particular Magister. If the Magister attacks, scorns, or attempts to trick or coerce any of these parties, a distant relationship results. Friendship and trust are met with the same; all of these entities regard Magisters as gifted children, to be politely and even affectionately encouraged and guided, so long and so far as each Magister desires it. A genuinely receptive Magister (as opposed to one who thinks to feign love and cooperation—a deception all of these beings readily see) will be aided, rescued, and empowered into swift rises in personal capability; such a one is Nouméa, the Reluctant Magister of recent note.

Mystra rules the Magister (though she does so lightly), dispensing commands, rebukes, and occasional encouragements on a sporadic, distant basis, but the god Azuth is the Guardian of the Magister, and serves most of them as a confidant and “wise old uncle” sort of adviser.

Sages have uncovered an old saying that resurfaces often regarding the Magister: “Azuth encourages and Mystra affirms.” This holds true in particular for the personal magical creations and projects that Magisters undertake. Mystra gives her approval and praises results without hinting that her judgment of a Magister’s service rests largely on such achievements, but Azuth the High One actively teaches, cajoles, and upbraids Magisters into achieving personal magical growth. Azuth appears often to Magisters, giving advice far more often than some of them appreciate hearing it. Mystra is seen more seldom, but “the weight of her regard” (a heavy, charged feeling of being watched) is felt more often and more keenly by Magisters than by other wizards.

The greatest tragedy of many Magisters’ careers is the severing (which most of them see as necessary) of their existing relationships with patrons, fellow mages, friends, and loved ones. Many attempt to conceal their identities while in office to avoid such rifts, or assemble caches of magic as gifts to benefit their lost friends. A few even arrange to die at the hands of a friendly successor (even a lover), but most Magisters see this as passing a death sentence on to the person who slew them, and thus arrange to be slain by their enemies.



The best-known way to become the Magister of Mystra is to defeat the previous Magister in spell combat. Few Faerûnians (even among mages of wide learning) know that this duel need not be to the death, or that the office of Magister comes to the victor only if the strife has been judged fair by Azuth (whose powers keep him in constant surveillance over the Magister, and enable to him view immediately past events involving the Magister over and over again, if need be). One of the High One's duties as Guardian of the Magister is to, whenever possible, prevent interference in duels by third parties (including attacks by multiple mages against the Magister). Azuth also reports on the misdeeds of both Magisters and their challengers to the Lady of Mysteries.

If a Magister dies by sheer misadventure (such as a shipwreck or avalanche) or illness, is slain in a combat not judged fair by Azuth or one that also claims the challenger's life, Azuth names a new Magister.

Things were not always thus; in the past, Mystra herself has made such offers to mortals, and some obviously unfair combats have led to the transfer of the office, but the Lady of Mysteries has now wholly embraced the rules given here and revealed them to her most senior clergy.

Azuth always selects a wizard he believes will work to spread magic; he appears to that mage (in private whenever possible) as a visible manifestation. Azuth may precede this visit by testing the chosen wizard by concealing his divine identity and posing as a would-be apprentice or a wandering mage in need of aid. If Azuth finds the wizard suitable, he offers the title, which may be refused without penalty or disfavor.

By Mystra's decree, the Chosen servants of any deity (herself included), cannot be Magisters, nor can any being ever possessed by divine power (even as a temporary host) or given special powers by a deity be so named a Magister. Recently, Nouméa was both Magister and Chosen, but when she agreed to become the latter, she immediately began to lose the powers of the former, and Azuth soon invited a new mage to become Magister (see "The Magister Now" section later in this book). Undead cannot become the Magister, but some have successfully petitioned Mystra to be restored to life (as "Reborn," which is described in the chapter "Mystra's Choice") after defeating the incumbent Magister in a duel. Undead who manage to avoid slaying the Magister have a better chance of Mystra's aiding them rather than simply destroying them on the spot; undead who defeat Magisters by surprise attacks rather than in fair duels have almost no chance of a successful plea.

The Magisterial Duel

Though the office of Magister can be gained by a mage who survives a surprise attack by the Magister, such combats are not duels and hence not fair; if Magisters attack foes without formal challenges, they do so with no guarantee of divine adjudication.

Dungeon Masters with access to the *DUNGEON MASTER® Option: High-Level Campaigns* rulebook may use the detailed rules given therein (Chapter 5, "Magical Duels") to play out the events of a Magisterial duel. Or the duel can be conducted as a normal combat, with Azuth and Shadowstaves (see the chapter entitled "Mystra's Choice") appearing momentarily, as ghostly, translucent figures whenever third parties attempt to approach the duelists or launch magic so as to affect a duelist. (All such attempts will utterly fail, as if striking an invisible, magic-absorbing, unbroken and physically impenetrable barrier.)

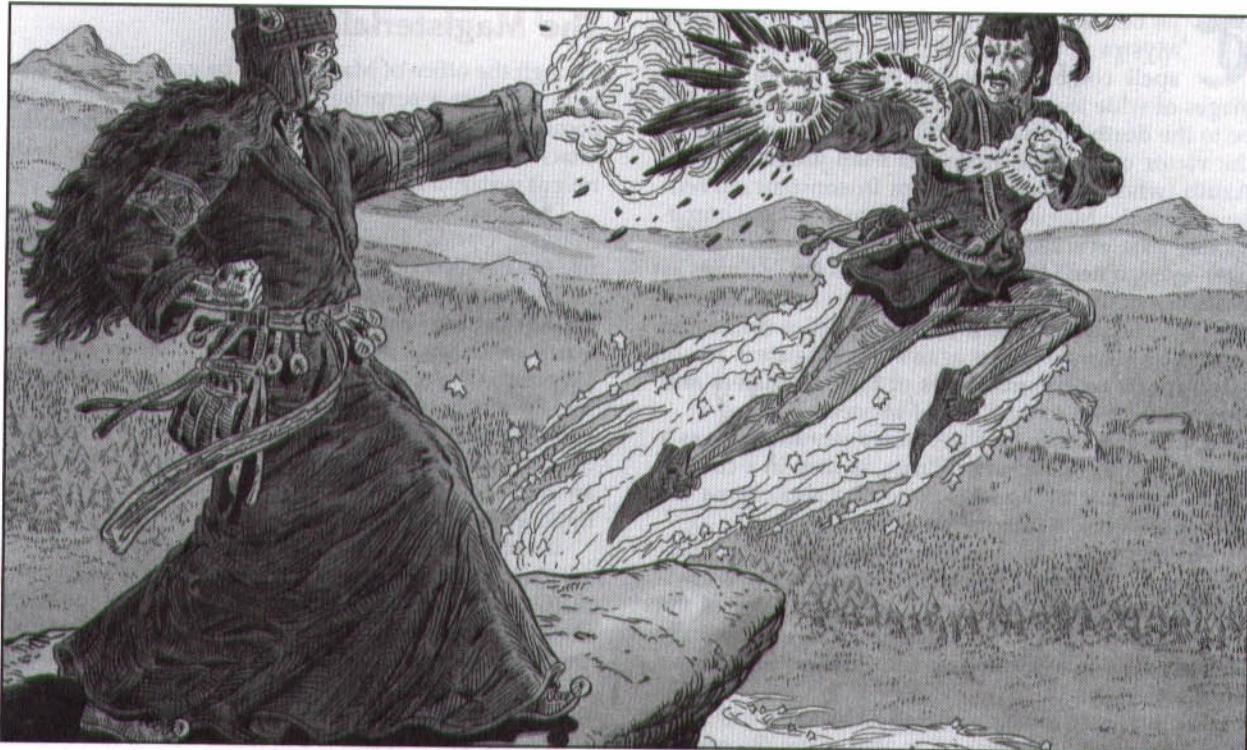
Use of the surroundings (rocks that can be made to topple, precipices, and other terrain features) and actual melee combat have occurred in past duels, but the High One uses his own powers to keep both combatants shielded from each other's physical attacks and from the environment, so that each floats engulfed in mists that block external spells, sights, and physical entry.

If a challenger requests a nonfatal duel (a rare event), or the god deems it fitting for his own reasons (usually to permit a Magister on the brink of a magical breakthrough from being destroyed before success is achieved), Azuth transforms all spells hurled in the duel into a magical field that resembles a whirling ball of green flame. This "whirlflame" combines the properties of *feeblemindedness*, *mind bar*, *mind blank*, and a "snatch" *teleport*. If either wizard is struck by it, the character will be instantly snatched away to a place of Azuth's choosing (usually a remote ruin or uninhabited castle somewhere in Faerûn), and there shielded from all scrying and locating spells for a period of witlessness.

The ball moves between the two combatants as their spells wrestle it in one direction or the other. In game play, a simplified alternative to the dueling rules from *High-Level Campaigns* can be used: a "straight track" of 25 to 35 squares between the combatants, with coins as markers. Each spell that successfully affects a wizard, rather than dealing damage or causing its usual effects, instead moves the whirlflame toward the affected wizard a number of squares equal to its spell level, so a *fireball* would do no damage to the target wizard, but pushes the whirlflame three squares closer to the target of the *fireball* spell. If the whirlflame touches a wizard but is pushed back during the same round, the wizard loses one memorized spell, chosen at random. If the whirlflame



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touches or overruns one of the contestants at the end of a round, that contestant loses the duel.

Regardless of how the duel is adjudicated, all “fair” nonfatal duels (as opposed to informal attacks) result in Azuth healing the victor and the loser, with the former becoming or remaining Magister, and the latter being exiled to a remote location in Faerûn (a location not revealed to the character, though he or she might recognize it). Exiled losers arrive in their cave, forest glade, ruin, or uninhabited sea isle stripped of all magic and protected against all magical means of locating or influencing them for a month or so—a protection that fades gradually). If Azuth or Mystra desires to teach a moral lesson or impart other information to a loser, whether former Magister or unsuccessful aspirant, the transported being will receive dream-visions to that effect, often a compelling whisper from the deity accompanied by a single relevant image.

Magisters who lose a duel but survive can choose to undergo Mystra’s Choice (see the section of that name) or simply walk into their own new life, Magister no longer. They will be offered Mystra’s Choice when they die. All Magisters slain in office face Mystra’s Choice instantly (though if they’ve served so little time that they’ve done nothing to advance the use of magic anywhere, or created no new magic while in office, they will automatically be deemed failures when the Choice falls upon them).

Duels cannot be refused on the grounds of weakness, important business, or lack of preparedness, but a Magister can voluntarily renounce his or her title and face the consequences (see “Leaving Office”) at any time. Note that this does not necessarily mean that the office of the Magister passes to the challenger facing the resigning Magister, but it is likely. Magisters cannot designate heirs to inherit the title, or voluntarily confer the office upon another being, even if dying (though Azuth may allow the title to pass in such a manner, making it appear that such a transfer has occurred without divine intervention).

Note that although a Magister cannot refuse a duel, Azuth, Shadowstaves, or Chosen can turn away challengers for the office if they deem a fair duel impossible at the time. This is typically done to prevent cabals of mages (the Arcane Brotherhood, for instance, or a group of Zhentarim or Red Wizards) from dueling the Magister in rapid succession, wearing down their superior opponent until the incumbent Magister has no magic left and must fall. Such a “turning away” consists of cloaking the whereabouts of the Magister from all challengers, and instantly and forcibly whisking either or both parties to a distant location on Toril, through *teleport without error* spells.



Question Duels

On at least two past occasions, Azuth has caused the duels themselves to change when he desired no harm to come to the combatants or the surroundings. Instead of trading spells, both duelists found themselves transported to a room of mists, where they took turns challenging the magical knowledge of their opponent by asking questions (not riddles, but straightforward—if obscure—queries as “Who was Askravan of Nudd, and what were his Seven Scarlet Curses?”).

Azuth served as the sole judge of both questions and answers, and senior clergy of Mystra, Azuth, and Savras received visions that relayed the entire duel to them, but concealed the identities of the duelists. Written records of the questions and answers thus overheard are among the most precious temple treasures of these three faiths. Requesting even a single matched query and reply can cost thousands of gold coins and a gift to the temple of useful and powerful magic.

Ascendance

Whenever the office of the Magister passes to a new mage, that being's forehead is immediately wreathed in crackling, blue-white lightning, which snarls around the new Magister's brow for a few minutes and then fades away as blue, silver, or white (there is apparently no significance to the color, though some clergy of Mystra claim otherwise) jets of magical force shoot out from the eyes of the affected mage and fade away.

Although this power surge causes pain to some recipients, it does no damage to either the new Magister or anyone in the vicinity. Further, it cannot be used as a weapon (though any item wielded by a person so “enstarred” with the Magister's power is temporarily considered a +4 magical weapon for the purposes of determining what creatures it can hit, though it receives no actual bonuses) and does not ruin spellcasting. It does strip away all existing curses, charms, and spells laid on the new Magister by other (even friendly) beings, prevailing against even *geas* spells and the like.

In an instant, the new Magister gains powerful immunities and protections granted by Mystra (detailed in the section “Magisterial Powers”), but to avoid overwhelming the minds of ascendant Magisters, Mystra reveals the other powers and responsibilities of the office over a matter of days following ascension. The Magister is always offered (by a feeling placed in his or her mind, not dialogue with the goddess) the immediate opportunity to be taken “elsewhere.” If this is agreed to, the Magister is either whisked to her own chosen place (if one is concentrated upon) or to a remote spot where she



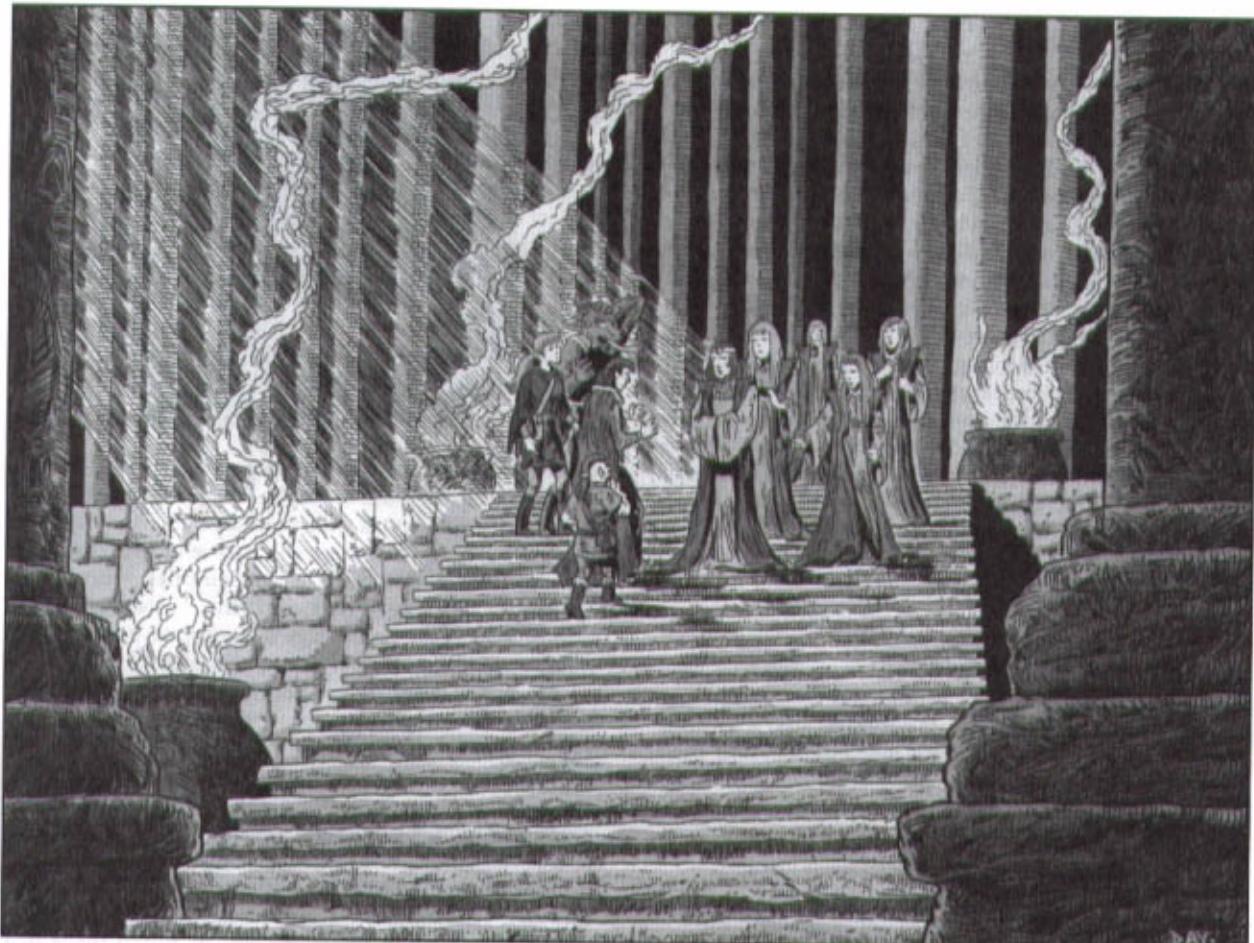
can expect to be undisturbed for some time, and—if she looks around and pays attention—may learn more about the history of Mystra, her worship, and the office of Magister. These remote places vary and (despite what some priests claim) rarely come equipped with handy spellbooks or racks of magical items. The development of a new Magister's powers is described in the aforementioned “Magisterial Powers” chapter.

All mages engaged in spellcasting, or in guiding or using an awakened, ongoing spell (but not studying or readying a magical item) at the time of a new Magister's ascent feel that a change in the office of the Magister has occurred. The sensation, felt Faerûn-wide among all beings working magic and therefore attuned to the Weave to some extent, is like an internal “earthquake of the mind” that one mage described as “silent thunder.” (It also occurs, and far more violently, when Chosen are named or destroyed, or when there is a great change in the power or state of any one of the four human deities most concerned with magic: Mystra, Azuth, Savras, and Velsharoon.)

Mortal wizards do not know who the new Magister is unless they consult with clergy of Mystra, Azuth, or Savras. In the temples of all three faiths, Mystra causes a manifestation that usually brings rituals to an awed halt. In the spheres, mirrors, and pools used for scrying, the Sigil of the Magister appears, flashes brightly enough to attract the attention of anyone in the nearby, and then, very slowly, alters to form the sigil used by the mage who has just ascended to the office of Magister. This sigil is displayed for perhaps ten minutes and then vanishes. The process then repeats itself once. After this time, clergy who know the right spells can cause the new sigil to appear once more for study, but individual priests lacking the records kept by large temples may still not know to whom the sigil belongs. In all cases where a mage has used different sigils over time, or adopted one confusingly closer to a sigil used by



Becoming the Magister



another wizard, the new Magister's name will appear, written out in the Common Tongue.

Often, individual priests of Oghma, Deneir, Selûne, and Shar will use spells, payments to Azuthan, Mystran, and Savrathan clergy (the priests of Mystra may not, by Mystra's decree, refuse to divulge this information, if they know it, to any—regardless of their faith or race, including fiends, beholders, alhoon, and liches—who make offerings), and interviews with wizards or possible witnesses to learn who the new Magister is. If the new Magister manages to remain mysterious, one can be certain that the sages at the next MageFair will be busily answering queries about the identity of the current Champion of Mystra. (For obvious reasons, Magisters rarely attend MageFairs.)

Player Character Magisters

If a player character (PC) mage becomes the Magister, the Dungeon Master (in consultation with the player

and all others who play in the same campaign) must decide the fate of the character.

The easiest decision is to retire the PC Magister with honor, allowing him or her to become a non-player character (NPC) solely under the control of the DM. Alternatively, the player can agree to have his character face Mystra's Choice (seeking an appropriate "transformed retirement" or new beginning) after roleplaying a short career as Magister. Such an abbreviated tour of duty would typically end after the character devised a single new magic, performed at least one important deed or quest, faced at least one challenge or duel (retiring to face Mystra's Choice afterward, even if successful), or achieved some other agreed-upon goal.

More on the possibilities of roleplaying a mage who has risen to be Magister is explored in the chapter titled "The Magisterial Campaign."

Powers of the Magister



Many legends swirl around the Magister, which is hardly surprising given the steady augmentation of magic that Magisters down the years have created and used, and the individual tasks various Magisters have undertaken. The most common misconception (even among mages and sages) is that the Magister is a sort of "master spy," able to constantly eavesdrop on the minds and deeds of all wizards in Faerûn.

Others are certain that the Magister's powers are boosted by a direct connection to the Weave, and that Magisters can "ride the Weave" in a series of unlimited teleports to move around Faerûn freely, or that Magisters have the power to command all dragons to obey them slavishly.

All of these beliefs are wrong. The Chosen of Mystra are connected to the Weave in various ways (closely enough that, for instance, an elven Chosen will not feel the call to Arvandor), but Magisters are mortal. Many command awesome spells and demonstrate both a broad knowledge of magic and great creativity in crafting spells, but these are more talents that got them to the office than they are abilities that come with the title.

That is not to say that most wizards will not sacrifice almost anything to gain the mighty powers that Magisters have. In some ways, they are even more powerful than Chosen, though their roles and responsibilities are far less. The time is overdue for mortals to know more about the true powers of the Magister, no matter how much this endangers future Magisters. Wherefore, this chapter explores just what Magisters can do.

Some sages may react to the lore that follows with frank disbelief or burgeoning fear. To those who fear these powers seem overly mighty, Elminster and Laeral say thus: As Toril is a world strong in magic, Mystra is its strongest Divine One. It should come as no surprise that her anointed servitors have great power. Moreover, it should be remembered that the powers of the Magister exist to enable the incumbent wizard to survive long enough to accomplish something toward Mystra's goal of expanding the use of magic. Magisters who use their abilities to hunt down every mage they see will soon be stripped of their office. Magisters who only lash out with harmful magic to defend themselves or others against magical oppression know Mystra's smiling approval and flourish.

The New Magister

The moment a being becomes the Magister, her brow is visibly encircled with the lightning of her newly achieved rank. Mystra instantly makes her new Magister immune to all magic, and protected as if by an

ironguard spell. This immunity is absolute though temporary (see below), and extends even to the magic wielded by all gods save Mystra and Azuth.

A new Magister can be battered to death, or harmed by strangulation, falls, or nonmetallic weapons, but wizards or archers hoping to fell the new Champion of Mystra from afar find that their best efforts fail. *Meteor swarms* may burst and volleys of shafts hiss down, but the Magister stands unaffected.

The immunity to spells of the Enchantment/Charm school, and to magical mental influence of all sorts, lasts as long as a Magister is in office. Also, no Magister can be controlled or compelled by any psionic power, spell, or magical item function. Even artifacts that bear divine influences, such as the *Crown of Horns*, fail to control or affect the mind of a Magister. In this, Mystra protects her Magisters better than she does her Chosen.

The immunity to all other schools and spheres of magic, however, soon falls away, one school or sphere being lost to the Magister every 1d4+3 months (the schools and spheres are randomly chosen). The *ironguard* protection fades after nine days. The Magister knows when each protection is lost, but can do nothing to prevent this process. Azuth's first lesson is to make fledgling Magisters aware, if it is not already obvious to them, that they should not try to thwart the will of Mystra by pleading or trying to work magic to maintain such shielding. As Azuth counsels, the Magister should use this time to create, alter, and assemble an array of spells for self-defense—something that will be constantly needed henceforth.

A Magister still has access to her previously developed magic (if Azuth judges retrieving spellbooks and magical items would put the fledgling Magister in immediate peril of death or a duel, the god transports (once, not as a recurring magical delivery service or storage cupboard) the desired items to the Magister without forewarning or fanfare. The Magister also gains access to an impressive array of new personal powers that become apparent throughout the day after ascension, in roughly the order they appear here.

Personal Powers and Immunities

Magisters have small insights into the Weave—enough to let them know when large magical discharges have occurred nearby, when someone within 60 feet is unleashing magic, and when their own spellcasting is working or failing. This increased proficiency with the Weave allows a Magister to (in a 90-foot-spherical range) sense wild- and dead-magic areas, dimensional gates or portals, lasting magical wards and boundaries—even if not active at the time—and magical traps and not-yet-triggered or "hanging" spells. These abilities are sometimes collectively referred to as



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"magesight," and operate ceaselessly and automatically, even awakening sleeping Magisters in time to evade peril.

A Magister is always protected by *feather fall* (automatic) or by *levitation* (when willed). In other words, if a chasm opens up under a Magister, she begins to gently descend until she notices what is occurring, whereupon she can stop in midair (a stance considered stable enough, when the being is a Magister or Chosen, to cast spells from) for as long as desired. Use of these two abilities is not considered as casting spells.

A Magister can *water walk* and *dimension door* at will, up to six times each per day. As abilities and not spells, these can be exercised at the same time as the Magister casts spells. A Magister could thereby blast a foe with a spell and *dimension door* away an instant later. All Magisterial dimensional travel (including this ability and teleportation) is made without error.

The Magister has *true seeing* (as the wizard spell) whenever use of this ability is concentrated upon, and *read magic* in like manner.

The Magister has a personal magic resistance of 44%. (In the rare event that a being ascending to the office of Magister possesses a higher magic resistance than this, the Magisterial resistance of 44% prevails.) If this resistance overcomes a hostile spell, the Magister can (in addition to whatever magic she may be casting or preparing) do nothing or choose one of three options below.

If the Magister does nothing, the spell's effects take place, but the Magister, complete with all worn or carried items, is immune to all damage and consequences of that spell, including being made intangible to falling or flying objects for the round, so that collapsing ceilings and the like do her no harm.

The three options a Magister may choose are as follows: The spell is cancelled (nothing happens); the spell effects are redirected by the Magister back at the source or at a third party; or the Magister transforms the spell energy into (random) wild-magic effects, directed back at source or at a third party.

In addition to this magic resistance, the Magister is always undetectable by all divination magic, and is immune to the spells *imprisonment*, *sink*, and, like the Chosen of Mystra, one wizard spell (and its reversed form, if any) of each level that the Magister chooses. Having once selected these, a Magister cannot alter or change them later.

A Magister can penetrate magical barriers and spells of 6th level or less, walking through them as if they do not exist, and with complete immunity to their effects. This immunity extends to items worn or carried by the Magister. A Magister's passage does

not cause any encountered barrier, mantle, spell, or other magic to collapse. The Magister simply passes through such barriers.

A Magister is immune to all glyphs, symbols, runes, sigils, and enchanted inscriptions and her presence does not trigger them.

The Magister is always intangible to magically created or animated constructs or automata (such as golems and caryatid columns, but not undead). These beings' limbs pass harmlessly through a Magister as steel does through a mage protected by *ironguard*; so a golem could stand behind a Magister and attack foes through the wizard's body.

Just as the Chosen do, Magisters can hear their own name, and the title "The Magister" or just "Magister" whenever it is spoken aloud in Faerûn, plus the nine words immediately following. This ability imparts an idea of the direction and distance of the speaker. This ability can be turned off at will. Whenever a Magister awakes, however, it is active. (It will not awaken a sleeping Magister.)

Spellcraft Abilities

Many sages and mages believe that Mystra and Azuth confer permanent, ongoing *legend lore* ability (as the wizard spell) on every Magister, but this has never been the case. The aforementioned *magesight* gives a Magister who can observe the effects of a cast spell at leisure (not in the midst of combat) a fairly accurate (70%) guess as to the school or sphere of the magic. In a like manner, a round of concentration while handling an item can give a Magister a rough idea of what magic may have been cast on, or stored in, or helped to shape, it. However, this is neither an *identify* spell nor an augmentation of *legend lore*, and says nothing about the nature, origin, and history of the item, only revealing its interaction with the Weave.

What Magisters do gain in spellcraft is the ability to freely change magical specializations after three months of preparation (or revert in a day to an already mastered specialization), if they choose to specialize (most do not), and the ability to memorize spells very quickly, requiring only 1 round of study per spell level of each spell.

Through visions sent by Azuth, Magisters also gain an inkling of where a spell used by previous Magisters lies (in written form, if it survives) if—and only if—they think of a similar magical effect.

For example, a Magister speculates mentally about the possibility of crafting a spell that returns tarnished and broken metal implements to their original, smelted and refined—but unworked—metal. If no such spell has been devised (or an existing spell been altered, not merely used) by a previous Magister, either before

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coming into office or while in office, nothing happens. However, if a Magister created or refined such a spell, or if a spell that could be used in such a way, a dream as to its whereabouts will soon come to the Magister. This does not lay out a precise route to the magic, bring it to the Magister, or guarantee that its recovery will be a safe or easy matter—but neither does the Magister forget the vision, once it is received.

Spellcasting Powers

Through the link to the Weave that the office confers, a Magister can cast spells “perfectly.” In other words, targets save vs. all a Magister’s spells at a -2 penalty on their saving throws, and the Magister chooses the exact damage her spells do, from the maximum to just 1 point per die, or anything in between.

A Magister never needs material components to cast spells (but does need them while creating or experimenting with unfinished magic), and can cast all spells of 4th level and below without somatic gestures.

As Chosen of Mystra do, a Magister can cast a specific spell of each level, once per day, without study. This magic simply, by the grace of Mystra, returns by itself 24 hours after casting. The Magister must select such spells, which are not considered part of her spell roster (and thus occupying no “slots” in the Magister’s memory) from spells she has personally (not from a scroll or book) and successfully cast. Once chosen, these spells are not changeable until a full year has passed from the moment of selection.

One very powerful spell that inquisitive Magisters can receive visions of is the legendary “mantle” of protection developed by ancient mages, which increases in power as the casting wizard gains experience levels. If a Magister thinks of, and later recovers, the *mantle* spell (and both Mystra and Azuth must deem it important, for they seem to guard many copies of it, in a wide variety of locations around Faerûn), its usual casting and maintenance costs (a draining of both the caster’s hit points and memorized spells) are “paid” by Mystra, not affecting the Magister at all. (Full details of the *mantle* spell appear in the “Magisterial Magic” section.)

Active Powers of the Office

Records indicate that either Mystra has stripped many active powers from the office over time, or (and this is considered more likely by both Laeral and Elminster) most of these powers are now kept secret even from incumbent Magisters until Mystra sees a need to

reveal them. Two abilities, however, are made known to all Magisters: *imburement* and *the Magister’s ban*. Their natures make them both rarely used.

A Magister can, at will, *imbue with spell ability* by touch, granting one creature the ability to cast a specific spell that the Magister has memorized at the time. Use of this power permanently removes one hit point from the Magister, who must choose to have it take effect in one of three ways. The recipient creature can cast the spell for a tenday, starting immediately, up to thrice an hour; the recipient can cast the spell on the day of *imburement*, once for every completed year of life she possesses, and then again on the anniversary of that day, one year later (up to a number of castings equal to one less than the previous year’s total), again a year after that (with the total lessened by one again), and so on until zero castings are reached and the ability ends; or, the recipient can cast the spell only on nights when the moon is full, and a maximum of twice on any one such night. Mystra specifically forbids her Magisters from telling the *imbued* being anything about these casting limits unless the creature specifically asks. This prohibition—and the order to tell all, if asked—is permanent, applying to queries at any time, not just at the moment of *imburement*. This conferred ability can outlive the Magister who imparted it; it is not ended by death or retirement.

A Magister can, by order of Mystra or Azuth or by personal decision, place a ban on specific spells, Toril-wide. This must never be done lightly or for personal gain or safety, but only to serve the higher purpose of furthering magic (and, it must be remembered, should not be a matter of good versus evil). Mystra orders (and, in fact, causes) the end of a ban. Such prohibitions rarely last more than a tenday or a month at most, though lorebooks record bans that lasted a season or even a year. A ban is a private act, not a public proclamation, and only is discovered “the hard way” by wizards, unless they happen to have access to Mystran or Azathan clergy who uncover such a ban.

The Magister’s ban is a substitution, not a nullification: A banned spell can still be cast, and will always have an effect—but it will be the effect normally caused by another spell that the Magister is able to cast. In other words, a Magister can make the casting of a *fireball* result in a *dancing lights* spell effect—or a *cone of cold*. Level and school need not correspond, between the original spell and its substitution, but a Magister can never replace a spell with a random spell effect, or a wild-magic surge.



Leaving Office



So much has been written, told around campfires, and intoned in temples about Magisters falling like flaming stars from the sky in this spell-battle or that, leaving office only through death, that almost no one knows the other ways in which Magisters can cease to be the champion of Mystra.

Even many Magisters do not consider their options, as they have not the time before a duel is thrust upon

them, and all options are snatched from them forever. Know, then, through Elminster and Laeral, all the ways a wizard can cease to be the Magister of Mystra.

A Magister can be slain in spell-combat, die by misadventure (innocent or not-so-innocent accidents), or be defeated in combat—that is, rendered unable to fight on or put at an opponent's mercy—but survive by their own means or through their powers as Magister. Magisters who flee from attacks are not considered defeated.

A Magister can voluntarily renounce the office, resigning from the service of Mystra. This and all the other fates mentioned above bring the former Magister to face Mystra's Choice, dealt with hereafter.

A Magister can also try to rebel against Mystra. This usually results in a rebuke in the form of lessened powers, but no release from the office (thus making death in a duel more likely). It is rare for a rebellious Magister to be forgiven and restored to full powers.

A rare few Magisters renounce all power on the grounds that they are unworthy, or wearily come to consider themselves blunderers who do more harm than good—but whom plead with Mystra to be allowed to serve her in some other way, rather than resigning from her service altogether.

They must come to this decision unbidden; neither Mystra nor Azuth will suggest it. Records of this particular event exist in the paltry few diaries that still exist from earlier Magisters, and in some sages' accounts of past Magisters' deeds.

Mystra enters the mind of a Magister who makes such a request, to determine if it has been done sincerely, without thought of personal gain and in true dedication to the goddess. If so, she offers the Magister the chance to become one of her near-immortal Chosen. Azuth took this route, soon ascending to godhood under Mystra's sponsorship.

Chosen who later weary of their service can choose death by their own actions in service to Mystra (most commonly in battle) or face Mystra's Choice once more, with their options being death, reincarnation, or becoming one of the shadowstaves that serve Mystra and Azuth (detailed in the next section of this book, "Mystra's Choice").



Priests of many Faerûnian deities tell the faithful that upon death, the god they revere judges them, and gives them a fitting doom or reward. In truth, most gods of the Realms reach out to seize the souls or spirits of beings who have greatly pleased them (or whom they see as greatly useful) and let the rest pass in the usual manner.

Mystra reaches out to the souls and spirits of all great mages at their passing, and all of her Magisters and Chosen, too, great or otherwise. She tests their resolve and character, reviews their past performance, and either works a doom upon them herself, or offers them Mystra's Choice. All that priests of any faith say about this Choice is that a *speak with dead* spell does not work on any being who has undergone it.

The Lady of Mysteries may restore the bodies of Chosen and put them back to work, if they desire it, but Magisters never survive the Choice unchanged.

In Mystra's eyes, a Magister must have created a new spell or altered an existing one (beyond a simple amplification or variant) and given it to at least one other mortal mage to be rewarded. Otherwise, a dead Magister is deemed a failure.

The Fate of a Failure

A failure can choose to perish utterly (passing out of Mystra's hands), or become one of a variety of magic-related creatures. These include a wizshade (described in the MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® Annual, Volume 4), a will o'wisp (detailed in the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome), a tarsardar, better known as a "staff spirit" or "sword spirits" (detailed in this chapter), and the strange being known as the wingless wonder (also detailed herein). Failures retain their sentience and memories, and some are tortured by the glory of Mystra, now lost to them forever.

Failures can also choose to be reincarnated as dragons, weredragons, beholders, or unicorns. In such forms, they begin new lives, with all memories of their previous existence lost (though some of these beings find their original self's memories begin to resurface in their new form's old age). Upon choosing such a form, Mystra forces them to immediately make some spell choices (choices they will forget having made when they awaken, somewhere on Toril, in their new bodies, aware only that they have special powers, and of the details of those powers).

Reincarnated failures permanently gain the ability to cast one spell, if any, that they created or modified during their lives (while Magister, or before) as a natural spell-like ability. This magic is castable by silent act of will, without need of components, and can be unleashed once per day, to be usable again 24 hours after casting. They also gain immunity to one specific

wizard spell of each level (these immunities need not be the same spell immunities they had as Magister, and are permanent once selected).

Only in old age might a failure remember something of how he or she came to have such special abilities. A failure who took this Choice could in theory rise to challenge for the office of Magister again and win it, though no one has ever attempted to do so.

Rewards

Magisters who have served Mystra well but who have been slain, defeated, or become weary of office can choose to become shadowstaves (described later in this chapter), choose rebirth (details of the Reborn follow this section), or can bargain for a unique fate with Mystra, some of which follow.

Greentree Haven

Eirl Rauthantannar (reigned 236–247 DR) laid himself down in barren ground and grew plants out of his body, seeking to "bring back the bounty of the land." By the will of Mystra, the *decanter of endless water* this Magister carried became a spring of pure water, the plants grew swiftly into a forest, and the remains of the Magister melted away to create an enchanted grove in the wilderlands of the Sword Coast North where items can be readily enchanted, wards are augmented, and Dove Falconhand goes to dance (as briefly seen in the novel, *Silverfall*, TSR #21365). The precise powers of this grove (called Greentree Haven by some) are as follows:

Any sentient creature, living or undead, whose body bears an active (operating, not merely present) enchantment or who is casting magic or wielding an operating magical item within the grove can, at will, cause himself or herself to become *invisible* for as long as the magic lasts, and up to 4 rounds thereafter (this state can be willed to end at any time, costs nothing, and does not alter or drain any other dormant or operating magic).

Any creature who knows the properties of the grove and who is standing within it (they must be in physical contact with the ground) can cause the air for 7 feet above the ground to glow with a faint silvery radiance, akin to a *faerie fire*, throughout the grove. This effect lasts 1 turn once activated (it cannot be turned off), prevails against magical *darkness*, and can be renewed or reawakened at or after its expiration, as often as desired. It costs nothing, and its activator need not be a mage.

Any magical barrier or protective magic cast within the grove, or on a being within the grove, lasts for the maximum possible time and is of the maximum possible strength or efficacy (even if such effects are normally possible only when the spell is cast by a



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being of a much higher level). Further, these augmented effects persist, if the magic is mobile (focused on an item or being, not a location), when and if the magic (and the item or being bearing it) moves outside the grove. Moreover, this sort of spell does not disappear from the caster's mind when cast within the grove, and therefore may be cast again later. A second casting, inside or outside the grove, exhausts the spell in the normal manner. The spell must be memorized as usual, and any spell components are required for both castings.

Any beings who leap about within the grove are automatically affected as if by a *jump* spell (in other words, they can leap for long distances), a *feather fall* spell, and a *faerie fire* spell, unless they specifically will such effects not to occur. These properties can be quelled by any person (one need not be a mage), and persist only within the boundaries of the grove. The effects of *fly*, *levitation*, and *telekinesis* spells are tripled in duration and extended in distance to encompass the entire grove, if any of these magics are cast on a being or an item within the grove.

Any being within the grove can will the air above the entire grove, to the height of 7 feet, to rise or lower in temperature by 20 degrees. The change occurs within 2 rounds, can be altered by any sentient being

within the grove at will, and persists until willed to end or until the being who changed the temperature either dies or leaves the grove. Note that in extremes of regional temperature, use of this power immediately causes intense, persistent fog at the boundaries of the grove.

Any enchantment cast on an item within the grove to recharge it or to transfer new powers to it from another enchanted item has double efficacy (charges are doubled, transfers take half the normal time to accomplish, and so on).

Adriyana's Garter

Adriyana Voudsarr (reigned 278–292 DR) became *Adriyana's Garter*, a powerful artifact that is thought to still exist (it was last seen used by the adventurer Yargildas of Altumbel in northern Impiltur in 1356 DR), though its present whereabouts are unknown.

A thigh-band of black leather, chased and tooled (in a repeating pattern of human right hands grasping staring human eyeballs), and trimmed with black lace that seems to survive the passage of years and the rigors of wear unscathed, the *Garter* alters in size to fit the wearer, and functions whenever clasped about any limb of a living creature (it will fit the neck snugly, not strangling a wearer).



History

Despairing over the destruction wrought on innocent passersby when wizards hurled powerful spells, Magister Adriyana pleaded with Mystra to release her from office. Mystra offered her Choice, and Adriyana chose to transform herself into this artifact. In 886 DR, it was possessed by the half-elven adventurer Rildara Dranthree (the same Rildara who later fell from a skyship into the Sea of Fallen Stars, presumably to her death, after climbing aboard the vessel as it slid past the roof-turrets of Arrabar).

Campaign Use

Yargildas, the warrior seen wearing the *Garter* in Impiltur, walked through a wizard's furiously hurled spells and cut the mage down, but evidently came to a sticky end sometime later. A band of adventurers hiking across desolate wilderlands north of Impiltur recently came upon a circle of stone pedestals atop an otherwise bare tor. Each pedestal bore a chalked symbol, and within each symbol, some weapon or other enchanted item (such as a helm, a shield, and a brooch) that (they determined later) had been worn by the unfortunate Yargildas. Of the warrior himself, there was no sign except much dried blood. One pedestal had lost the item crowning it—but the missing item had left behind a blood-free spot, enabling the adventurers to determine that it had been something circular and flexible, such as *Adriyana's Garter*.

A legend (which Elminster says is false) has arisen concerning the *Garter*: Anyone wearing it when he or she dies shall be reborn four mornings after perishing. Yargildas is not the first person to lose the *Garter* through violence, and it seems more than likely that he will not be the last. Elminster does say that Adriyana sometimes speaks to the *Garter* wearer, warning of impending hostile magic with a few cryptic utterances, and that this valuable power may have fed the false legend . . . as well as making the item highly prized in its own right.

Powers

Constant: Whoever wears the *Garter* gains a +5 bonus to Armor Class and is immune to all heat and fire damage.

Invoked: When the wearer's mind or body is contacted by any magical effect or spell, the *Garter* automatically makes its wearer immune to all subsequent magic hurled at the wearer (magic still takes effect and the wearer's surroundings are affected, but the body of the wearer is protected). This absolute immunity operates for 1 turn, notwithstanding any number and combination of spells, but thereafter will not work again until 14 full turns have elapsed since the power's last use ended.

Curse: If any attempt is made to cut or chop the *Garter*, or it is touched with anything metal, the being or force that originated this contact is violently thrust away from the *Garter* by an unseen force, which deals 2d6 points of damage if the target tries to resist or cannot reel backward 10 feet, or 1d6 hit points if the caster freely allows the striking force to carry him back. Magically animated edged weapons (such as *swords of dancing*) or metal tools trying to touch the *Garter* are pushed away and "frozen" (their enchantments wrestled with) in midair for 1 round.

The *Garter* also shares the properties and powers common to all artifacts; it radiates magic only dimly (never revealing a school of magic) when scrutinized with *detect magic*, and cannot be located, or its powers delineated in detail, by *legend lore* or *contact other plane* spells. It is also immune to *detect evil*, *identify*, *know alignment*, and *locate object* spells.

Suggested Means of Destruction

The *Garter* can be destroyed only by convincing Adriyana to seek a new fate, and this can be done only through entreaty by a creature who dedicates itself to Mystra's service for so long as it endures, and by then wearing the *Garter* while it lies on an altar consecrated to Mystra and repeats the vow of service. Mystra then will almost certainly manifest a silver-blue mist that transports the offering being and the *Garter* to a place of her power, for both to face Mystra's Choice.

Onsilur's Gem Prison

Onsilur Maerdrathom (reigned 321–326 DR) was trapped too long inside a *kiira* (an elven lore-gem, detailed in the campaign expansion *Cormanthyr: Empire of the Elves*, TSR #01165), and went insane, leaving office as a result. Still inside the gem, Onsilur's sentience faintly babbles out speech (intriguing, cryptic, and sometimes wildly raving) and descriptions of a scrambled sequence of memories (drawn from among all the remembrances stored in the gem over time).

Crown of the Undying Flame

Hortil Droone (reigned 337–345 DR) became the *Crown of the Undying Flame*, a royal crown of Westgate, and has lived vicariously through its wearers, down through the passing centuries. The crown (with Hortil's sentience) survives, though it has long been hidden and its present location is unknown.

The palm-sized black cabochon-cut gem held within the angled arch of the crown-spire dominates a simple circlet of bright, silver-plated steel that rises into a spire at its center front, the *Crown of the Undying Flame*. The stone is of an unknown gemstone type, which is hardly surprising considering it is really blown glass treated



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with a permanent *glassteel* spell, and in its depths a flame can be seen constantly flickering and leaping. This impressive but tiny fire is bright enough to be seen at quite a distance, though its dancing nature makes it useless as a light source for reading.

History

Facing Mystra's Choice after a disastrous Magisterial duel, Hortil convinced Mystra that he could best spread the use of magic by influencing rulers to think of magic and to dare to experiment with the Art, encouraging local mages to create ever greater spells. She transformed him into the crown, which appeared unheralded on the steps of the royal palace in Westgate.

Though it was proclaimed a royal crown and a gift of the gods by the court wizard of the day, it seems his examinations of the regalia led him to mistrust it, and it never graced a royal head in the city, being banished instead to a deep, damp treasury vault. Centuries later, in 1192 DR, it was remembered and decided upon for use in the coronation of Maeraedrynn (who no doubt desired to distance himself in every way from rumors that he might have had something to do with the demise of his predecessor, Roadaeron II). However, when the sealed vault was opened, the crown was no longer there. Its whereabouts since are uncertain, though there are many tales of "a crown that drinks spells" being worn by this or that adventurer or petty ruler up and down the Vilhon Reach.

Campaign Use

The *Crown of the Undying Flame* has indeed rested on many heads. It was recently stolen from Glamaddder, a wealthy caravan merchant, and is presumably still held by the thief. At least two mages currently in the Reach know what the *Crown* can do, and are employing both their own spells and hired agents (notably the adventuring band known as Havnaether's Fist) to seize it. The first mage is Othdil "the Tamer" Mauneiyn, known for his spell-mastery of monsters and his brutal way of employing them to attack foes. The second is the cold and ruthless master-of-intrigues, Roekandal of Reth, who long ago left the city where his tower stands, to roam the southern Realms building his power by slaying mages he thinks he can best, and seizing their magic. Some might judge the gaining of the *Crown* before either of these two to be a service to all Faerûn; others believe that trying to do so is folly itself.

Powers

Constant: The diadem absorbs all spells cast at it or its wearer, swallowing them utterly. The spells' properties are made known to the wearer of the *Crown*, who can hurl them forth as if casting them like a wizard, but

by a silent act of will. Only one spell can be called forth per round, and doing so in 2 consecutive rounds is very tiring; a wearer is drained of 1 hit point (which can be regained in the normal way) whenever the *Crown* emits spells in successive rounds while worn by the same being. Such spells are lost from the *Crown*. The absorption is automatic; the wearer cannot "turn it off" or choose to absorb one spell but not another. The *Crown* cannot absorb area-effect spells that have no target, but can intercept spells redirected in some way from another target to the *Crown* wearer. Note that the *Crown* has no effect on magic carried or cast by the wearer that does not have the wearer as, or included in, its target.

Invoked: If (and only if) the wearer is of the proper class and level to cast a spell that the *Crown* has absorbed and stored in the usual way—even if the spell is unknown to the wearer—the wearer may touch a spellbook page, piece of parchment, or other organic writing surface and cause the *Crown* to write down the spell, in complete and castable form, so as to create either a spell scroll or a spellbook entry that can be studied or from which the spell can be cast. Doing this drains the spell silently and harmlessly from the *Crown*, and requires three consecutive rounds of uninterrupted contact between the wearer and the page; if contact is broken, the magic "spills" and is lost, the unfinished writing vanishing. Treat these pages as normal scrolls or spellbook pages respectively.

The *Crown of the Undying Flame* can also blaze with faerie fire when the wearer wills it to, in addition to and uninterrupted by operation of its other powers. The glow thus produced will always be of the hue and the dancing nature of a flickering flame.

The *Crown* grants its wearer the ability of *true seeing*, but this power costs the temporary loss of 1 hit point per round of its operation. Once willed to cease, this ability cannot be used again until after 9 turns.

Curse: Whenever the *Crown* absorbs a spell, there is a chance that it permanently drains its wearer of 1d6 hit points and 1 point of Intelligence, and then teleports itself away to an unknown, random location, leaving its former wearer behind. This chance is 2% when a single spell is absorbed in a round, 4% when two spells are absorbed, 8% when three spells are taken in, 16% when four are absorbed, 32% when five are faced, 64% when six spells are absorbed, and 66% when seven or more magical effects are absorbed by the *Crown*.

The *Crown* also shares the properties and powers common to all artifacts, described above for *Adriyana's Garter*. It emits spells as if cast by a 20th-level mage; and all emitted spells have a casting time of 3, regardless of their nature.



Suggested Means of Destruction

The *Crown* must be struck by seven *dispel magic* spells in the same round while worn by someone who is himself launching a stored magic from the *Crown* (it is thought that the diadem will explode, beheading and killing the wearer in the blast).

The *Crown* must be placed on an altar consecrated to Mystra and spells cast into it, all in the same round, to match exactly the magic currently stored within it.

The *Crown* must be struck by a *shatter* spell while it is worn by a being who is also wearing at least one other enchanted crown on his head at the same time. It is conjectured that in this case the *Crown* will crumble harmlessly into dust, some of its stored spells being themselves *teleported* elsewhere and unleashed in random locations, as if cast by an unseen wizard.

Morglord the Gate

Morglord Iltriune (reigned 523–527 DR) turned himself into a *gate* (a magical conduit between two fixed portals that allows instantaneous travel), and now—by some not yet understood magical means—"he" steals vitality, memorized spells, and magical energy (stored magical-item charges) from all beings who pass through it. Which *gate* is not known (Mystra refuses to say), but it is thought to be one in or near Waterdeep, perhaps one of the intra-Undermountain *gates*. For more on the *gates* of Faerûn, see the chapter titled "The Road of Stars and Shadows" in this book.

Annath the Grell

Annath Sunfall (reigned 544–576 DR) became a seemingly immortal monster whose shape is that of the fearsome creatures known as grell (MONSTROUS MANUAL tome, p. 173). He resembles a worker grell, does not age, speaks human tongues and not the grell language of chirps and squawks (though he can mimic the latter well enough to fool all but a grell), and is immune to all magic. Through Mystra's grace, he cannot be located, influenced, or made to yield up any thoughts or information to prying magic of any kind or origin (and he seems personally resistant to psionic contact). His tentacles paralyze in the usual grell manner, and he hunts prey as real grell do (though he avoids devouring humans and demihumans).

Annath cannot work magic, and has a rare and strange effect on enchanted items he comes into contact with. His mere touch permanently "twists" magical items into cursed forms or equivalents (for example, a *cloak of elvenkind* might become a *cloak of poisonousness*), and at the same time the magical energies of the item wash through him, healing all current damage, with no other effect on him. Of course, the properties of the cursed items he has created do not affect him either.



Annath retains his full intellect and memories, and is now a bitter, heartsick wanderer. He regrets ever becoming Magister, and the fate he chose for himself in Mystra's Choice. If he could think of a way to get Mystra to let him choose another fate, he would take it. To this end, he lingers near holy sites, shrines, and temples of Mystra. Annath moves on from these sites only when threatened by many weapons, and has been known to use his tentacles to write "Pray to the Lady Mystra for Annath Sunfall" in hearth-ash or with chalk, charcoal or any other writing utensil he can find. Thus far, Mystra has not responded to such entreaties.

Haunted Flagon

Velgorn Kataclath (reigned 601–607 DR) chose to become a metal flagon (a drinking-jack that curves like a bull's horn, and flares outward at its top like the mouth of a trumpet). A permanent *wild magic field* emanates from the flagon, surrounding it with a 12-foot-radius sphere that affects any magic within or passing through it. Effects can be selected or rolled for with 1d10:

- 1: A variant *reverse gravity* occurs, centered on the flagon (which does not move, hovering in midair if circumstances cause it to be unsupported by a grasp or a table), that lasts 4 rounds.
- 2: Roaring spirals of green, glowing flame spill from the mouth of the flagon and encircle any being who bears a magical item or a recently cast enchantment (within the last 3 turns). The flames can burn undead (dealing them $1d4+1$ hit points of damage per round) but nothing else. They neither ignite



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flammables nor harm the beings (or their enchantments) that have attracted them. These rings of flame persist for 5 rounds.

- 3: Any vegetable matter within the *field* is suddenly and permanently transformed into a shrieker (see "Fungus" in the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome) that rises up, shrieks, and then begins to move around in the *field* as quickly as it can, in a random path of travel. Any organic matter that is no longer living (such as a slice of cheese or meat) will be transformed if no plant matter is at hand.
- 4: All metal objects within the *field*, even if attached to other things (such as belt buckles or embedded nails), vanish—being *teleported without error* to a random spot about a mile away. Sometimes this causes a heap of material to materialize suddenly. No creature in the *field* gains any sense of where or in what direction the missing metal has gone, and may well lose weapons, clothing, or, at the least, dignity. This is an instantaneous event, and will not recur until after another magical effect has been emitted by the flagon.
- 5: All the air in the *field* shimmers a silvery gray, equivalent in intensity to a *faerie fire*, which after 1 round begins to shrink, coalescing to form auras around individual living creatures (visible or otherwise) who are wholly or in part within the *field*. The auras move with the beings, persisting outside the *field* if an aura's being moves out of the area, but fade after 2 rounds, and have no other effect.
- 6: Amid a singing sound and a swirling of white, sparkling motes of light, a single randomly chosen object in the *field* that is not attached to or worn by any living being will *sink* halfway into the floor or ground. The lights fade almost immediately, but the *sink* effect is permanent unless ended by magical means or by physically digging the object free.
- 7: All wood and stone within the *field* is instantly and permanently affected by a *glassee* spell.
- 8: One to four monsters (of random types) suddenly appear within the *field* and attack any creatures within it, or any creatures nearby, until slain.
- 9: All active enchantments, artifacts, and magical items wholly or in part within the *field* suddenly glow a deep blue, and then in unison fade to a glittering purple state. These items are then inactive (unable to be used) until 6 hours have passed. Spells cast within the *field* are not affected by this hibernation.
- 10: All small, unsecured mobile objects within the *field* (such as pebbles, cutlery, tankards, and even adventurers' weapons such as daggers or smaller weapons that have been set down unsheathed) suddenly whirl up into the air and rage around the entire *field* in a howling chaos that persists for 3

rounds. This *whirlstorm* deals 2d4 hit points of damage per round to any being wholly or part within the *field*. There is no saving throw to avoid or lessen this damage, but existing magical defenses confer their usual protection, and beings clad in plate mail or other rigid armor, or able to cover most of their bodies with a rigid shield, suffer 2 fewer points of damage). Beings who are able to move purposefully out of the *whirlstorm* can do so in 1 round if they attempt no other actions, such as picking up a particular item, towing a companion, and so on. The magic of this effect does not alter or harm the whirled objects, but the impacts of the objects on the surroundings can deal great harm (two or three item saving throws vs. crushing blow may well apply to each object within the *whirlstorm*).

Though Velgorn has no way to communicate directly with the world around, he seems to retain both his awareness and some means of perception, sensing his surroundings, movements, and events nearby. He reacts to those events by making noises (by tapping against objects and surfaces) and moving himself (that is, the flagon) around, hopping, tilting, spinning, and the like, at MV 14 (A).

For years, the "haunted flagon" has traveled from tavern to tavern around Faerûn, bought by traders interested in a conversation piece and then unloaded whenever it became a hindrance. Velgorn seems to enjoy intriguing people and being noticed (at least, so some observers have judged his actions), but has communicated no pressing desire to achieve something, do anything specific, or escape from flagon form. He's seeing the world and having a pretty good life—and for a flagon, that's something.

The Reborn

To choose rebirth is an election to have a second life, in a new body that is whole and healthy, with a different appearance (and, if desired, a different gender and/or race) from one's former shape. The Reborn retain their former level of intelligence, but can choose to be either "blind" or "wise."

A blind Reborn has no memory of being Magister and no ability to cast magic, but possesses one spell-like natural "talent" and the ability to pass this on genetically to offspring. Talents are magical effects akin to spells, but urged out of the natural forces of Faerûn purely by force of will. They typically drain 1d4–1 hit points from the Reborn, require no spellcasting activity, and return by themselves either 1 turn after use, 1 hour after use, or sometimes 12 hours after use (depending on the individual).



Some of the most common talents are listed below. Unless otherwise noted, they are equivalent to the wizard spells of the same names, and their effects can always be ended before the stated expiration time, by an act of will.

Typical Reborn Talents (d20)

- 1: *Invisibility*, self only, lasts 1d10+3 rounds.
- 2: *Levitate*, lasts 2 rounds per Constitution point of the Reborn, is physically exhausting to use, and can lift up to five times the Reborn's body weight.
- 3: *Change self*, lasts 4d6 rounds.
- 4: *Blindness*, range 10 yards, usual saving throw allowed. Its duration is 1 turn, and the Reborn must remain within 30 yards of the victim or the effect ends immediately; the effect also ends immediately if the Reborn touches the victim, either directly or with a weapon or tool.
- 5: *Strength*, self only, lasts 4 hours, gain 4 points of Strength to a maximum of 18/60.
- 6: *Minor creation*, lasts up to 4 hours, maximum area of effect 3 cubic feet.
- 7: *Locate object* or *obscure object*, either power at will, lasts for up to 1 turn, and has a range of 100 yards.
- 8: *Dispel magic*, as spell, or can be used to apply to self only, in which case it confers complete immunity to spell effects—though not to ancillary damage, such as that caused by falling objects dislodged by a spell blast that failed to harm the Reborn—for 4 rounds.
- 9: *Affect normal fires* for up to 1 turn and from a distance of up to 90 feet.
- 10: *Dancing lights*, lasts 8 rounds and has a range of 80 yards.
- 11: *Feather fall*, self only, lasts for up to 1 turn.
- 12: *Mending*, as the spell; the Reborn must directly touch the object to be affected.
- 13: *Light*, lasts 2 turns, range 20 yards.
- 14: *Shield*, lasts 2 turns.
- 15: *Spider climb*, self only, lasts 1 turn, MV 3, can carry extra weight up to the Reborn's own weight.



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- 16: *Darkness 15' radius*, if stationary, lasts up to 2 turns, range 30 yards, ends instantly if the Reborn moves out of range; can also be used by the Reborn as mobile, centered on self, lasts only 7 rounds.
- 17: *ESP*, 30-foot range, lasts up to 1 turn; Reborn who have this Talent can typically call on it again just 1 turn after its use has ended.
- 18: *Wraithform*, lasts up to 4 turns.
- 19: *Sleep*, one creature only, must be directly touched; lasts up to 2 turns; target allowed a save vs. spell; success means target is *confused* for only 1 round.
- 20: *Flaming sphere*, lasts 9 rounds, can be extinguished in 1 round by the Reborn.

Wise Reborn are powerless to work any magic except the extra spells they could cast and were immune to as Magister. These spells are retained, and return by themselves 24 hours after casting, as before. Wise Reborn can use wizardly magical items, but can never become a true wizard.

Wise Reborn retain all memories of being Magister and casting magic, and this has embittered and haunted some who have chosen this fate. Others have become sages (usually loners, though there are rumors—among the Heralds who have investigated the learning and careers of sages—at least one retiring to Highmoon in Deepingdale, and two or more who long ago entered Candlekeep) or tutors of magic. A rare few are adventurous enough to become "sorcerer-slayers" (hired killers of wizards) or magic hunters (retrieving specific spells for fees, and collecting magical items for their own use), sometimes taking up careers as warriors and founding adventuring bands to plunder tombs, wizards' towers, and ruins.

Wise Reborn can take the form of a wingless wonder (see below), voluntarily transforming themselves into it by an act of will alone. Their body shifts through a grotesque sequence of distortions, over the course of 1 turn. This shifting can be abandoned at any time until 7 rounds have elapsed. This causes the Reborn to "snap"

back into his or her own shape, losing $1d6+1$ hit points (which can be regained by rest or magical healing in the usual ways), and leaves the Reborn *confused* for 1 round. After 7 rounds, the shifting cannot be stopped.

Once in wingless wonder form, Reborn are trapped therein for at least 3 days. Thereafter, whenever they are touched by any active magic (such as a cast spell), Reborn in this form can choose to shift back (a 1-turn grotesque sequence that cannot be stopped, once begun, and must begin within a day of the magical contact) to become human again. In such cases, Reborn return to their current normal appearance.

A Reborn shifting in either direction is AC 7, MV 7, and cannot launch any attacks, speak coherently, or perform any but the crudest, simplest gestures and manipulations (waving and pointing, but no precise signals; grappling with an attacker but not parrying; throwing something away in a general direction but not launching it at a specific target). Note that a Reborn in this form who has never been touched by a spell can never leave that shape.

A few Reborn, of both blind and wise sorts, have become Masters of the Doors of various Mystran-temples. Others have set themselves up as merchants dealing in spell components, and hire or sponsor adventurers to bring them stock. They also pay adventurers for magical lore with spells or magical components, or hire adventurers to recover lost magic or sometimes just a magical phrase or symbol, copied and brought back from a book guarded or hidden in a royal vault, temple library, or lich's crypt.

All Reborn feel an affinity for magic, no matter what careers they choose or type they are, and more than one has found the desire and means (often heartfelt praying on an altar consecrated to Mystra is enough) to face Mystra's Choice once more.

As noted elsewhere, Lady Nouméa is an exception to the above rules for the Reborn. Full details on this Gentle Lady of Mystra can be found in the "The Magister Now" section of this book.

Shadowstaff

Secrets of the Magister

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CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary (or guardian groups)
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Nil
INTELLIGENCE:	As in life
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1 (1-8)
ARMOR CLASS:	6
MOVEMENT:	16, Fl 22 (A)
HIT DICE:	9+9
THAC0:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d4+1×4/ 1d4+1×4, or by weapon type
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Spell use, hold touch
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Wraithform, immunities
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	66%
SIZE:	M (average 6' tall)
MORALE:	Fearless (20)
XP VALUE:	14,000

Shadowstaves are former mortals who resemble ghosts or wraiths. They appear as translucent, shadowy humanlike forms or hooded, cloaked amorphous figures that seem little more than tattered cloaks—or cowled heads and shoulders whose bodies and limbs trail away to nothing. They walk, float, or fly silently about, often “rising from” or “sinking down into” apparently solid floors (actually becoming wraithlike and passing through crevices). No shadowstaff can ever become truly invisible, but as their name suggests, they can attain the appearance of a deep, dark shadow that cannot be seen by most creatures in dark or gloomy surroundings.

A shadowstaff is created by Azuth or Mystra from the soul or spirit of a Magister or a deeply loyal worshiper when the being is willing to enter such service, and is judged fitting for such an existence.

Combat: Though they resemble undead, shadowstaves are not—and therefore cannot be turned, disrupted, or commanded. Holy water just makes them wet.

A shadowstaff can become insubstantial at will, and in such a form can pass through the smallest crevices and holes, but suffers double damage from all contact with normal or magical flame or heat, and cannot launch attacks or carry things.

When solid, a shadowstaff can attack twice per round, either by wielding weapons it used in life (for the usual damage) or by “firing” *magic missiles* from its fingertips. A shadowstaff can emit two volleys of four *missiles* in a single round, or make two weapon attacks, or make one attack of each sort. Shadowstaves can employ any sort of magical item, precisely identifying all of its powers and controls after 3 rounds of handling (and doing nothing else except flying),



regardless of any restrictions against their doing so in their former lives.

Whenever it encounters an enchanted staff, a shadowstaff can “vanish” into it, and there regain 1d12 lost hit points by “stealing” a charge from the staff (if the staff has charges). While in the staff, it can drain one charge in this manner every 4 rounds, cannot be detected, and can only be harmed if the staff is broken (which destroys the shadowstaff). A shadowstaff can escape from a staff at will, but after doing so is trapped in its wraithlike, insubstantial form for 1 turn. A shadowstaff can never gain “extra” hit points, above its normal total, from draining staff energies.

A shadowstaff can choose to cast one spell in a round, rather than employing *magic missile* or weapon attacks. It can cast any one of the spells it could cast in its former life, choosing freely from a roster it never forgets or needs to memorize, but does require all normal material components to cast any spell unless it can touch any sort of enchanted rod, staff, or wand—whereupon it can if it desires drain the item of one charge (or force it into 1-turn dormancy if the item lacks charges), and uses that power to make the magic work without need for material components.

A shadowstaff has precise control over its *magic missiles*; it can choose to fire fewer than four in a volley, can adjust the damage each does precisely (to the hit point), and can attack multiple targets simultaneously. If it chooses to release two volleys in a round, all eight *missiles* are launched simultaneously.

Shadowstaves cannot hurl or drop missile weapons or

objects, because every item they release is cloaked in a feeble enchantment that *levitates* it for 1 turn after the last shadowstaff touch (in other words, a sword or lantern released by a shadowstaff will float in midair, unmoving, for 1 turn or until affected by a magical *gust of wind*, the grasp of a flying creature or other being able to reach it, or contact with *dispel magic*; only this latter sort of disturbance actually ends the *levitation* before its time). Shadowstaves have been known to snatch weapons away from creatures and then fly high up to release them, to leave them floating out of reach and thereby delay attacks or movement away by the creatures. They have also been known to "hang" pointed weapons above bound foes, menacing these opponents with possible injury or death unless they devote all of their efforts to getting out from under the hanging, waiting weapons in time.

Shadowstaves can choose to employ a special "*hold-touch*" attack whenever they desire, but doing so forces them to remain substantial for 6 rounds thereafter and leaves them unable to use their *magic missile* power for the same length of time.

The *hold* touch of a shadowstaff requires a successful attack roll and is equal in effects to a *hold monster* spell, though it can only be directed against a single being in any round (and is therefore saved against at a -3 penalty). The *hold* lasts for 1 turn unless the *held* creature is struck by an attack, or the shadowstaff desires the condition to end sooner. This ability is often used to "freeze" one mortal long enough for another mortal to discover it in a place where it should not be, or engaged in something illicit or hitherto secret.

Shadowstaves suffer only half the usual damage dealt by all cold-based and electrical attacks, are immune to life energy draining and all Enchantment/Charm and Illusion/Phantasm magic, and are "invisible" to psionics. They are immune to poison, petrification, *polymorph*, and death magic attacks. Shadowstaves can at will cause all items within 90 feet that bear a magical aura to glow with a cold white radiance (they need not be already aware of which items are magical to make this power work on such items). This *faerie fire*-like glow can be quelled by a *dispel magic*, but will otherwise last 2d4 turns.

Like Magisters, shadowstaves cannot be controlled or compelled by any psionic power, spell, or magical item function, short of the divine will of Azuth or Mystra—even artifacts fail to control or influence their minds.

Habitat/Society: Shadowstaves delight in observing the work and doings of intelligent creatures, and have a *tongues* ability, granted by Azuth and Mystra, that allows them to comprehend and communicate with any speaking creature. (A shadowstaff with access to *ESP* and similar spells can of course employ magic to learn even more, though unless direct contact or confrontation with particular mortal beings is ordered, the deities who create shadowstaves usually prefer that mortals remain unaware that they're under scrutiny, or of the nature and current interests of shadowstaves.)

Shadowstaves never willingly fight each other (though they may disagree in a lively manner over what should be done, and how best it can be accomplished), and with only rare exceptions work together loyally and smoothly in the service of Azuth and Mystra.

Retaining the intelligence and judgment they had in their former lives, Shadowstaves gain a more thorough understanding of magic and of events in Faerûn (thanks to their ability to eavesdrop).

Even many Magisters are unaware of how extensive, numerous, and tireless are the tasks set for shadowstaves by Mystra and Azuth.

Shadowstaves keep all Magisterial duels free from interference, advise the few mortal mages who know of and call on them, do the same for clergy of Mystra and Azuth who pray for guidance, and for clergy of Oghma who ask about magical matters, and so on. Shadowstaves also serve as unseen guardians of many Mystran temples and holy places. Mystra uses her shadowstaves as "unseen watchers" over sorcery. Remaining hidden, they manipulate the affairs of individual mortal mages so as to teach them the responsibilities that wielding magic carries; drive home some moral lessons (not to make all mages good, but to ensure that wizards know the consequences of their magecraft, as opposed to operating in ignorance); and drop hints, clues, and goads to spur wizards ever on to greater magical creativity.

The goads are more than just motivations for individuals. To this day, shadowstaves defend Aglarond and Rashtamen against Thay, to make Red Wizards strive to develop ever greater spells to try to defeat the foes that defy them but should not be able to, instead of turning on each other and destroying magical knowledge in a struggle that blasts Thay to a wasteland. Lurking shadowstaves repeatedly thwart Zhentarim mages who attack various dales (that again should not realistically be able to stand against them), so the mages of the Black Network work to craft ever more powerful spells. Tirelessly vigilant shadowstaves prevent fiends and worse from roaming out of Myth Drannor to lay waste to the Dales, Sembia, Cormyr and the Moonsea, so that wealthy lands and cities can devote their energies to trade and rivalries and hiring mages in related pursuits, rather than exhausting all of their magic and vitality in a deadly struggle for the freedom of central Faerûn. Myth Drannor thus remains a shining legend of lost magic and danger, luring adventurers and inspiring ambitious wizards to dream and perhaps to go adventuring....

Shadowstaves can be slain, but most avoid being destroyed in Mystra's service. They are doomed to slowly, over thousands of years, fade away as their souls become utterly exhausted. Collectively, their memories bear witness to much of the doings and wisdom of Mystra; the "new Mystra" (Midnight) grew greatly in maturity and knowledge upon making mental contact with her shadowstaves. The sheer load of human grief, suffering, and experience carried in those memories nearly drove her insane; much of her love for Elminster (a paramour of her prede-

cessor) is due to his swift and gentle work to shield and support her at this time, and so keep her sane. Azuth and Mystra can contact and even "see through the eyes of" their shadowstaves at any time, but they cannot manifest or speak directly through a shadowstaff without destroying it. Several mortals who have witnessed such unusual occurrences say that this is done only at moments of great importance. The phenomenon involves a small explosion of the shadowy form into a tongue of flame in which float the eyes of the deity, and from which its voice—accompanied, sometimes, by spells it launches—rolls forth. Elminster and Laeral agree that it would be a mistake for mortals to assume that the deities monitor all of their shadowstaves all the time, so that something said or done in front of one is certain to be personally viewed by Azuth or Mystra.

Ecology: Shadowstaves consume nothing and can have no offspring. They need not sleep or breathe, and can avoid falling damage by becoming insubstantial. Due to the nature of the service with which their existence is occupied, they either become infinitely weary or come to love particular mortals they see or are commanded to watch over. In either case, some shadowstaves request that their existence end—either in oblivion, or in a new form (perhaps restored to mortality, so as to woo or consort with their beloved). Azuth and Mystra have shown infinite compassion in granting such requests, but reserve the right to alter the memories of former shadowstaves, so as to keep some secrets.



CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Nil
INTELLIGENCE:	As in life
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	6
MOVEMENT:	F1 14 (A)
HIT DICE:	5+5
THAC0:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	3d4/3d4
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Item control
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Immunities
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	66%
SIZE:	M (6' tall but amorphous)
MORALE:	Fearless (20)
XP VALUE:	7,000

More commonly known as "staff spirits" or "sword spirits" due to the favorite types of enchanted items they like to inhabit, tarsardar are translucent, amorphous flying wraith-like beings that tend to appear tattered and "flowing" in form, keeping to a vaguely upright humanoid stance with a head and shoulders, but letting all else change and shift (one bard described them aptly as "ghostly glowing wisps"). Tarsardar are empowered to enter into any sort of item that bears even the smallest enchantment, dwindling down to fit within its confines (even if it's a gem or finger-ring), but can emerge at will, even if the item's powers include trapping souls or spirits, or controlling creatures. Like the shadow-staves they resemble, tarsardar may be mistaken for undead, but are not unliving, and are not subject to any magic or powers that govern or harm undead.

Combat: Tarsardar cannot be compelled or controlled by any known means (short of Azuth's and Mystra's command of the Weave, which can at will transform tarsardar into any sort of creature, or destroy them in an instant). They avoid combat when possible, although they are not hesitant to animate a chosen item from within and have it attack "by itself" if they see targets to their liking.

Tarsardar can control any item as if they were the class, alignment, and nature of creature the item was most intended for, of the highest possible experience level, and as if they were experienced in the use of all item powers and properties. A tarsardar must be in an unfamiliar item for 1 round of inactivity to master all item powers, but can activate an obvious power, or one it has recently seen in use, immediately upon entering an item—and all tarsardar can make items float, fly, and move around as if carried and manipulated by unseen hands, for it is actually the tarsardar that's moving, clinging



to the enchantment on the item by means of its unique nature.

Any *dispel magic* spell can drive forth a tarsardar from its chosen item (there's no need to roll for spell success to determine this result, only to decide the *dispel* effects on the item), but the *dispel* neither harms the tarsardar or keeps it out of the item for more than 3 rounds. (Note that if the tarsardar is animating the item, and it lacks the power to so move on its own, it will plummet to the ground if the tarsardar is banished.) If a tarsardar is within an item that loses all of its enchantments, it is driven forth from the item and cannot return (though it suffers no harm in the expulsion). Tarsardar can see all magical auras and bindings, as if using a permanent, ceaseless *detect magic*, within a 90-foot radius of themselves, perceiving items on all sides at once.

Tarsardar can deliver two "energy burn" touch attacks per round. These attacks are automatically successful if sent against a creature touching an item that a tarsardar is within, but a successful attack roll is required if the tarsardar is partially or wholly emergent. If a tarsardar is injured for more than 6 hit points of damage in a round and also manages to deliver a touch attack in the same round, the hit points over and above the 6 that they lose are added to the damage roll of their energy burn attack, as they "leak" excess energy.

Tarsardar can pass through the smallest of crevices and openings, changing size without pause. They cannot be harmed by winds, falling, or weapons that have the same form as the item they currently call home (for instance, if a tarsardar is inhabiting a magical ax, no bladed chopping weapon—magical or not, artifact or crude homemade ax—

can do it any harm). Moreover, they can deem themselves immune to one attack power (if any) possessed by the item they call home, and thereafter will be immune to that power and all related powers (for example, *lightning bolt* and *chain lightning* are related, as are *fireball* and *meteor swarm*)—even if launched against them from the very item they “call their home”—until the item is destroyed or they deem themselves immune to another magical attack form, of that or another item. Tarsardar can migrate from enchanted item to enchanted item at will.

Tarsardar are immune to Enchantment/Charm and Illusion/Phantasm spells, to death magic, and to all forms of *hold* and paralyzation magic. They are also immune to psionics and to all poison, petrification, *polymorph*, cold-based, and electricity-based attacks.

Habitat/Society: Tarsardar can whisper (in a haunting, wind-whistle drone), gesture, and write. They can also communicate mentally with beings they are touching. Tarsardar retain the intellect, memories, and character they possessed in their former lives, although many seem to grow sarcastic, cynical, or bitter, and are charged to increase the use and availability of magic for all, and to enhance the “awe” and allure of magic by making Mystra seem to be everywhere, and enchanted items to move and act “by themselves.”

More than shadowstaves, they seem to develop an independent streak and a desire to “play favorites” among the mortal mages they interact with. Some thwart evil mages as a matter of course (by making magical items flee or turn against them, for instance), while others confound good mages or magically gifted rulers or lawmakers.

Tarsardar do obey Azuth and Mystra and their Chosen, but tend to ignore the authority of the current Magister and all clergy of the deities of magic, and to follow the letter and not the spirit of dictates and strictures of Mystra, Azuth, and the Chosen when those beings are not actually present. Many tarsardar have been destroyed for disobedience, or forcibly and permanently transformed into wingless wonders (see hereafter), common mules, and other creatures (sometimes even those suitable for use as familiars). When such destruction occurs (at the hands of Azuth or Mystra), the tarsardar



can be viewed as having shifted alignment, losing the lawful (and perhaps the neutral) facet of their nature.

Tarsardar never willingly fight each other, even by means of items they animate. Rival mortals who attack each other with items that are inhabited by tarsardar will usually discover that such items suddenly become inert, all powers simply refusing to activate.

Ecology: Tarsardar need not eat, drink, breathe, sleep, or keep warm. Many are curious, and will move to investigate any magic they detect (which has misled some human sages into believing they somehow “feed off magic”), but they need not do so, and are part of no food chain or natural cycle.

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any nonarctic wilderness
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary or pair
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	Q×2
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1-2
ARMOR CLASS:	8
MOVEMENT:	6
HIT DICE:	2+2
THAC0:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	9
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1 (×8), 4d4
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	"Dying scream"
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	<i>Antimagic shell</i> , immune to fire and heat damage
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	44%
SIZE:	S (4' tall)
MORALE:	Fearless (20)
XP VALUE:	650

Known to some sages as the alkada, and to many common folk as "the walking egg," the wingless wonder must be one of the most comical, stupid, awkward, and odd-looking creatures of Faerûn. A "wonder" looks like a blue-green egg with a purplish bottom, a head of wormlike tentacles, two rather unsteady legs, and two puny arms that it flaps constantly, as if it were trying to fly (hence its common name).

Wonders are shortsighted and curious. They explore the world with an air of shy innocence, occasionally emitting a high-pitched chittering. They redden when angry or excited and are attracted to flashy objects and anything red or purple, the more brilliant the better. Gems, cut glass, and other sparkling or translucent but light-catching objects fascinate them, and wonders devour such things whole without harm. They do not digest these curious trophies, but carry them in their stomachs until death.

Combat: The large, sad-looking eyes of an alkada can only see about 6 feet, and the creatures do not tend to notice menacing approaches or anything short of an attack that hits home. They commonly react to attacks by chittering excitedly and reaching out with their tentacles at whatever hit them, in case it might be good to eat.

Wonders prefer to dine on fruit, but have a tendency to put almost any living thing into their mouths and chew, spitting out what they do not like the taste of (a highly individualistic matter, from one wonder to another). The beaklike, extremely powerful snapping and grinding mouth of a wonder is atop its head, surrounded by a restless fringe of eight tentacles that are normally about 2 feet long, but can shoot out rapidly to full lengths of 12 feet each.

Alkada legs and tentacles are soft, rubbery, and sticky; the legs end in hoof-shaped flexible pads that can cling to



even slippery and near-vertical surfaces, and the tentacles can grasp and hold anything they touch that the wonder desires them to, including humans in armor (unless such humans employ *oil of slipperiness*), though the grasp of a tentacle can be broken by any hit on it.

Wonders use their tentacles to explore surroundings, help in moving around, handle items, and bring food to their mouths. Almost anything is considered food until the wonder learns otherwise; its tentacles feel along all accessible sides of any encountered item in an attempt to identify it. While alive, wonders radiate a continuous *antimagic shell* that extends out several inches from their skin, and is visible as a faint purple-white glow (akin to *faerie fire*) when a wonder is pregnant. They are immune to all damage from natural and magical fires, but suffer 1 hit point per die of damage from explosions (such as the burst of a *fireball*).

Wonders cannot be subdued or made to flee; they seem oblivious to offered doom, and endlessly surprised by pain dealt to them, rather than swiftly identifying weapons that have done them harm.

When slain, a wonder lashes out at its slayer(s) with a psionic blast so awesome in its power that the disintegrating mind twists the mental effect into invisible beams of physically damaging raw force. One beam stabs unerringly at each creature within 120 feet of the dying wonder who has recently attacked the wonder, and deals the target(s) 8d4 hit points of damage (no saving throw). This "dying scream" is the only time an alkada exhibits psionic or magical powers.

The fuzz-covered skin of a wonder is delicate and heals slowly; most alkada live out their lives dripping blood from many small wounds. They are easily slain and have become rare in populated areas.

Habitat/Society: A wonder can function as either male or female. Whenever two adult wonders meet for the first time, they intertwine their tentacles and chitter excitedly in chorus, exchanging fluids through tentacle ducts that fertilize pea-sized eggs inside each other (all alkada produce these, and carry an internal cluster of up to a dozen at all times). Some six months later, both wonders will excrete a rubbery egg about the size of a human head (pregnant wonders can carry multiple eggs at once, if they should happen to encounter more than one of their own kind for the first time during a pregnancy). The excreted eggs fall to the ground and split open to reveal small and clumsy (but otherwise fully developed) wonders. These offspring often accompany their parent for a time, but are expected to fend for themselves.

Sane wonders (see hereafter) never willingly fight other wonders and dislike violence, noise, lots of rushing about, and death. They like to wander, though they develop "favorite spots," and seem to retain a sense of where such places are, showing an astonishing ability to cover great distances to return to them.

Some persons who possess large walled gardens have created "wonder pens," into which offal and refuse are dumped; wonders seem content to devour creature wastes, kitchen scraps, dead bodies, and other recently living things as long as they also have access to living things (such as bushes, grass, and flowers) upon which they can dine. Wonders will eat other wonders, but only after death is certain (rotting has begun).

Ecology: Wingless wonders have probably escaped extinction because their flesh tastes putrid and is poisonous to all mammals. Sages believe that a slightly larger, slower, twelve-

tentacled subspecies of alkada has now died out. Wonder skins rot in 1d4+3 days after death, but before decaying can serve as fireproof coverings or cloaks against natural (not magical) fire. The *antimagic* field of a wonder fades within moments of its death. Wonder eggs can often be salvaged from wonder corpses, and if kept warm and bathed in nutrients such as thick soup (which they can absorb at an astonishing rate) will usually grow by themselves and eventually split to emit a very curious and hungry miniature wonder into the world.

Almost a quarter of all alkada roaming Faerûn today are actually transformed humans or demihumans (most of whom were mages, though very few of them are Magisters or former Magisters). They are the result of a fad among wizards; the notorious Durshult the Doomweaver was forced into wonder form after losing a duel with Rarimmon Tlarn, the Archwizard of the Castle in the Clouds. For decades after that, mages delighted in transforming defeated foes into wingless wonders.

Lacking the means to work spells or communicate effectively with others, such unfortunates are trapped indefinitely (though young mages needing tutors, allies, or aid have been known to cast spells on any alkada they meet, in hopes of freeing a wizard who might feel beholden to them, and render them a service). Beings trapped in alkada form retain their intelligence and knowledge (though acting "as stupid as other alkada" is often their wisest course of action), and the frustrations of their existence often drive them insane. (To determine insanity, check once per year, with a base percentage chance of 50 minus the being's wisdom score, and plus 1 per year spent in wonder form. What form the insanity takes varies widely, but often includes multiple personalities, with one or more of them being murderous and maniacally energetic, and others being schemers who may try to thwart the murderous sides.) Beings in wonder form exhibit no "dying scream" power when slain.



Magisters Remembered

Jt is a fascination of all civilized races to codify the persons and events of the past, uncovering secrets and attempting to understand (or in some cases, willfully misunderstand) the reasons, values, and schemes of beings now dust, and days now long gone. Laeral and Elminster feel the allure of setting forth What Has Gone Before, but find themselves curiously without aid from Mystra or Azuth in this compilation. Both deities, for instance, refused to say anything about Azuth's rise to the office of the Magister, or his later ascension into divinity.

"Let all come to my Art fresh, and use it in fresh ways," Mystra said to them, when Elminster was so bold as to ask why she said nothing of names and dates and deeds. "My Magisters served me, and such matters are between me and them. They have already done great service to those who would read of their affairs and mistakes and shames by the Art they have wrought, and passed on."

To this Azuth added, "Some may see vying for, winning, and holding the office of Magister as a contest—but it would be very wrong to look at past Magisters and try also to compete with them. How twisted toward world-shaking will such observers become? And how does it serve all Faerûn, if every iota of Art is thrust into ever greater means of destroying, and none of it into the small and everyday usefulness that benefit so many more, so much more?"

Select Magisters

When reading what follows, therefore, it must be borne in mind that this look at past Magisters is not a complete roster. Moreover, it must be noted that many Magisters are known by several names, the deeds of some have been confused with the acts of others, and no definitive roll of names has come down to any one known source. Where information given is scanty, be aware that sages know no more at this time to add to what appears herein.

Azuth, the High One

The first Magister raised to power by Mystra, the deeds of this mightiest of mortal mages are the stuff of colorful legend. It is known that he defeated the god Savras and imprisoned his essence in a scepter, and that he served for many years as Magister before ascending to godhood himself under the tutelage of Mystra—but as to the time and specifics of his career as Magister, reliable history records nothing . . . and Azuth says even less about.

Shorntal Imynster

(reigned 136–148 DR)

All history records of Shorntal is that his ankle-length blond hair trailed unbound behind him as he stalked

through the courts of many a realm, speaking plainly and picking fights with lord after king after high priest. Shorntal was neither tyrant nor braggart, but he had very fierce ideas about how Faerûn should be ruled—ideas not popular with those who sat most thrones of the day. They attacked him with arrows and poison and spells, all in vain. When they sent golems against him, he revealed a spell that allowed him to shatter such colossi with one blow of his hand. He fell in battle, but it is not now remembered against whom.

Flaerivus Grevaldyn

(reigned 151–154 DR)

A onetime mercenary swordsman who rose to command his own company (The Silver Swordpoint, chartered in Athkatla in 131 DR), this shrewd, handsome warrior—a dashing figure sporting a short, curling, pointed beard, gold earrings, and leaping, merry wits—rescued a priestess of Mystra from an orc raiding band in 137 DR, and in return she taught him the rudiments of sorcery. She never knew that he had already discovered a tomb that held a series of spells that gave the caster's clenched fist mighty powers. Within two winters of their meeting, Flaerivus was rising into the highest ranks of magecraft.

He fought his first challenge against Thaerdimor, the self-styled Mage-King of Daerimathlor (an island realm that took in the isles around The Race, off present-day Tethyr), in 141 DR. Others swiftly followed, as established mages began to notice this upstart in their midst, and in 151 DR Flaerivus defeated what one sage of the day (Merlivert of Athkatla) described as "the six most powerful wizards of the Sword Coast," and "out of the shattered smokes of that battle, rose like a living black flame as tall as a man, and flew from wizard tower to tower, dealing death, until he came at last to a tower where an impossibly tall and thin man sat, blue stars winking in his hands and here and there in the snowy tresses of his beard. And from this one the black flame that had burned others down to bones shrank back, and Flaerivus stood amazed." The mage of the blue stars revealed himself as Azuth and offered the onetime mercenary the office of the Magister.

Flaerivus accepted and set about gathering young apprentices. He saw his only hope of survival in the establishment of a great school of wizardry, in which all were taught obedience to him, and all magic was brought to him, so that Magister Flaerivus would always have the most powerful spells.

Other mages saw what he was about and regarded his fledgling school as the greatest threat yet to their own power—so they attacked in force and destroyed Flaerivus as he struggled to master a half-finished personal mantle. Its backlashes tore him to bloody ribbons,



but did the same to most of his attackers, leaving lesser mages to proclaim themselves mightiest in Art.

One boldly proclaimed himself Magister and survived the audience with Azuth that promptly followed. Thus began the career of "the Dark-Eyed Storm," Malanthus the Tireless.

Malanthus Stormstaern

("Old Stormweather," "The Dark-Eyed Storm," "The Tireless")

(reigned 154–177 DR)

This handsome, flashing-eyed and black-bearded actor and seducer became as well known in the cities of power in his day (which stood along the southern and eastern shores of the Sea of Fallen Stars) as many rulers. His magic grew so mighty that he slew dragons with apparent casual ease, destroyed dozens of challengers, and in the end traveled Faerûn dispensing magic and warming beds in complete safety. None dared challenge him. So diligent was he in such pursuits that cuckolded rulers who dared not raise a hand against him dubbed him "the Tireless."

The eyes of Malanthus were liquid black flecked with gold, and he spread his favors so widely that hundreds of families in the lands that border the Inner Sea's southern coasts today have occasional children with dark and flashing eyes.

Malanthus was said to love fine wine and music and to have dabbled in the making of scents. He is known to have dwelt in what is now Turmish for some years, and to have had a keep hidden in the Earthfast Mountains, somewhere near the headwaters of the Fire River (presumably buried in an avalanche and thus lost to searchers today), and a mansion high on Mount Thulbane, which was torn apart by battling giants long after Malanthus's death.

When Malanthus died (after being struck by a "falling star"—something that hurtled down out of the sky in a happening of apparently random misfortune, not a magical attack at all, though some say it may have been a mis-helmeted spelljamming ship), he was succeeded by his oldest friend and onetime apprentice, the kindly Dorgon Stonecloak.

Dorgon "Stonecloak" Heamliolothtar

(reigned 177–241 DR)

In this passage from *Dark Times in Hastarl*, an unseen chapter of *Elminster: The Making of A Mage*, Dorgon appears to us:

Elminster was too young to look back once he had found the fire to go on, so he never saw the lips that had whispered to him of duty, lurking in the shadows in the lee of the tomb.

He had to have been startled indeed to see them now—as they gathered shadows of their own, darkening and curl-

ing around them like lazy plumes of smoke in still air, to suddenly coalesce into . . . a man. A bearded man in robes—no, two men, for behind the shoulder of the bearded man floated the form of the Master of the Velvet Hands, white and bloodless.

Farl lived, small white radiances flickering about his parted lips and closed eyes as he breathed, and by their light the bearded man tugged and sighed over the cracked and heavy tomb lid, grating it aside until he could reach in to touch his lips to one cold cheek of the lifeless lass who lay within.

Tassabra had no idea what the Magister of all Faerûn looked like, but knew awe anyway as she blinked up at him. The bearded stranger smiled at her with the night stars winking and glimmering over his shoulder. He had a kindly face. Then she saw Farl floating behind him, and knew that there were gods in the world after all.

Dorgon is seen again in *Elminster: The Making of A Mage*, as a wise old man with wrinkled hands, defending himself against a challenge from the Magelords of Athalantar in 229 DR, the Year of the Black Flame. A kindly, peaceful man capable of ruthless retaliation when he saw it as needful, Dorgon enjoyed the longest Magisterial career since Azuth the High One.

When he grew too feeble to continue in office, Dorgon sought out the most unprincipled mage of his day, Sirdan Aulauger of Shussel, and attacked him. Both mages died in the spell-battle that followed, and Azuth offered the office of the Magister to Faerndel of Mourktar (who became the first recorded mage to refuse the post) and then to Nelorth "Firefists" of Sheirtalar.

Nelorth "Firefists" Broamshoulder

("Nelorth the Luckless")

(reigned 241–242 DR)

A young and energetic dreamer, Nelorth was consumed with ideas for improving the structure of sorcery and the importance of all mages—but died at the hands of his third eager challenger, Weldrarn Orblin, after besting two others. (Hereafter, Mystra and Azuth began the practice of shielding The Magister from combined or successive challenges.) It was Nelorth's misfortune to follow into office two archwizards so powerful that none had dared openly challenge them—so there were many accomplished and hungry mages waiting a chance to seize a post they saw as granting great power to its holder (not realizing just how great the personal Art of "the Feeble Giants," Malanthus and Dorgon, had been).

Nelorth is known to have stored some spellbooks and Netherese magical items he considered too powerful for most mages to use, but too useful to destroy, in "the Sphere of Spells," an invisible, floating sphere of magic larger than many a manor house . . . but its whereabouts, and how to open it, are lore now lost to us.



Magisters Remembered

Weldrarn Orblin

(reigned early 242 DR)

An arrogant, brutal battle-mage who had honed his sly and slaying magic in the covert "shadow wars" between rival Calishite families, Weldrarn spent most of his brief time in office hiding in various ruined keeps, trying to whelm a mighty array of spells to crush anyone who might dare to challenge him. He was still working on a chain of triggering magic that would allow him to hurl eighty or more spells at any foe without lifting a finger, when his third Magisterial duel became his first—and last—defeat.

Tsanbrin Aulmeroevler

(reigned late 242–244 DR)

A hearty, merry trickster of a mage, Tsanbrin challenged Weldrarn Orblin because the Magister smashed apart the school of wizardry in Sultim where Tsanbrin was studying (in his fear-driven hunt for more powerful triggering magic). It was a duel he only won through his tumbling skills and wild behavior, which led a flustered Weldrarn to blast a tower without noticing, in his rage to reduce the capering Tsanbrin to ash—an old, stout fortress tower that promptly fell onto Orblin.

Driven by a need to perform daily acrobatics and pranks, Tsanbrin gave away magical secrets almost compulsively, cared nothing for his own safety or power, and lost his second duel in office. He became one of the hardiest of Mystra's shadowstaves, an existence he still enjoys today as "the Laughing Flame of the Lady." According to Nouméa, he and the shadowstaff that was once Flaerivus spend much of their time trading jests and trying to outdo each other in an endless, friendly game of anticipating what the mages of today will do (and when, and how).

Brymmyn Thorl

(reigned 244–246 DR)

A careful, stolid giant of a man, spade-bearded and cold-eyed, Brymmyn planned his battles and every expedition out of his stronghold meticulously, intending never to be taken by surprise. He spent much of his time creating extradimensional "safeholds" attached to existing magical gates (translocational portals created by ancient workers of sorcery. For more on such things, see "The Road of Stars and Shadows" chapter of this book), so that the user who knew the right passwords (Brymmyn alone) could "step sideways" into such a place when using the gate, rather than emerging from its other end.

All of his more conventional lairs (such as his now-toppled tower on the eastern flanks of the Troll Mountains, overlooking Giant's Plain) he shrouded in thick,

intricate networks of magical traps, so as to forcibly *polymorph* (into saltwater clams, so as to cause their helpless, agonized deaths as they suffocated out of water) or destroy outright. The tower fell in a fight between rival mages scavenging for magic long after Brymmyn's death, when one of them changed shape into a dragon and burst the tower apart, unintentionally abetted by the fiery spells hurled by the other. Both wizards perished in the collapse, and there have always been tales of magic not yet found, still scattered over the windswept, jagged pinnacles of rock in the vicinity.

Brymmyn was slain in his tower by Corthas Muheer, a mage who used magic to change his shape into the semblance of Brymmyn's bed, and thereby ended up inside The Cold Lord's defensive wards while Brymmyn was visiting the tower for a last time to salvage all the magic he wished to carry away to his various safeholds. Corthas gave the incumbent Magister a restless, fitful sleep before rousing him for a formal duel, which Brymmyn lost, retreating in the end into the shape of a stone gargoyle carving perched on his own battlements—which his foe promptly shattered into gravel.

Corthas Muheer

(reigned for a day, in 246 DR)

A young, ruthless mage bent on ruling the world just as fast as he could rise in power enough to smite down the mountains to his will, Corthas planned his clever slaying of Magister Brymmyn, executed it with precision, and then sat down to rest, exhausted and almost drained of magic. Awakening late the next morning, he sought to win his way free of possible traps in Brymmyn's stronghold and study spells anew outside—only to be butchered by a crazed wizard who had just ventured into the stronghold. This intruder had by coincidence blundered into one of Brymmyn's remaining safe routes through the tower, and was ascending a secret passage furnished with stabbing holes commanding a spiral staircase.

When someone came hurrying down that staircase, the crazed intruder Galeerie Mulurkrath caught up a sword he had found in the stronghold, giggled, and used it. The soul of Corthas was probably not treated by Mystra as if he had been a Magister.

Galeerie Mulurkrath

(reigned 246–249 DR)

Given to fits of capering, giggling, and howling madness, this sallow, ugly, southern-born mage spent much of his time perfecting magic to make himself strong, muscular, and attractive. Hopelessly smitten by anything female that was not as ugly as himself, he squandered his time and Art trying to impress or cozen lady after wench after passing farmwife, until a



husband who had wearied of this hit him over the head with a dung-shovel one morning, and thereby gave the world a new Magister.

Talana Brakuularn

(reigned 249–256 DR)

Awarded the office of the Magister by Azuth within hours of Galeerie's demise, Talana was an efficient, short-tempered, large-girthed woman who liked to organize folk and affairs and loved to take charge. She was also woefully unprepared for dealing with folk she could not dominate and frighten into obedience—such as other mages of power. Her naming as Magister was probably an experiment on Mystra's part that some might see as cruel . . . and others as a dangerous gift she had full opportunity to refuse.

Talana dwelt in Shoonach (now a haunted ruin in present-day Tethyr) and organized all of the wealthy ladies, and their servants, who had any aptitude for magic into an informal club with herself at its head. Members were not to experiment with spells on their own, or attempt "dangerous" castings out of line with their standing in the club. New magics were to be laid

before all members (the prestige of the giver rising with each significant magic given), and Talana thus drew on all the Art possible for her own advancement, denying it to others who defied or displeased her. When resentment of her grew so strong that most members of her club were withholding magic they gained so as to practice privately, seeing a day when they might have to battle "The Lady of Spells" who headed their ranks, Talana organized the first MageFair. Held in the full shadow of Shoon dominance, it attracted only journeymen, would-be apprentices, and lackspell hedge-wizards . . . who of course seemed capable enough to the Lady of Spells, and confirmed her own opinion of herself as a mighty sorceress (when measured against them). Perhaps sixty folk in all attended, about a third of them alchemists and apothecaries seeking to sell all manner of strange goods to spellcasters. Perhaps a dozen attendees were anything more than novices-in-Art.

Talana was entirely unable to see that several of the wizards were Shoon agents sent to see if any foreign power was seeking to worm a way to weaken the heart of the empire, and to acquire any useful or powerful magic they saw. No such perils or benefits were



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to be seen, and the agents (acting separately, as concerned individuals) urged Talana to hold her next fair, two or three summers later, in Amn or Calimshan to see if new wizards might come and her grand enterprise grow.

That last word fired Talana's ambitions, and over the next two years she worked tirelessly writing letters and questioning well-traveled merchants, so as to try to spread word of her fair as far among "true mages of Faerûn" as possible. She was made Magister barely a month before the second MageFair, and spent several frantic days having an appropriately haughty blazon created, and a wardrobe of grand gowns to display it.

Someone at the fair murdered Talana in her bed, reducing her to ashes among the night-silks (there is evidence that the killer pretended to be a mighty mage smitten by her charms, and was willingly granted entrance to her bedchamber), but never made it back to his own rooms to gather his belongings and steal away—someone else who had been on the way to visit doom on the fair Talana encountered the new Magister, slew him, and was in turn slain by yet another wizard creeping around in the night.

In all, some ten or eleven mages slew each other with spells, knives, and stone plant-pots toppled from balconies. The last mage to leave his rooms bent on sinister purposes staggered back to bed, bleeding. When confronted by the mage who had been sleeping in the next room, the bleeding survivor took the form of a lizard man—and attacked.

A third mage awoke, looked into the corridor to see a lizard man tearing apart a wizard, limb from limb, and promptly slew the lizard man with a hasty spell. So began the rather longer Magisterial career of "the Whisperer."

Eirl Rauthantannar

("The Whisperer in Shadows")

(reigned 256–276 DR)

A kindly, wary man who made a career of hiding in shadows and adopting many demeaning disguises (he once spent the better part of a month as a dung-carter in Zazesspur while a persistent Magister-hunter among ambitious mages vainly scoured the city for any sign of him), "Old Eirl" was not a young man when he ascended to the office of the Magister, and his subsequent growth in magecraft was as slow and careful as the man himself.

On the other hand, he was the first Magister since Tsanbrin to give magic to others without thought of immediate personal reward—and he gave far more, and with far more care for those he was giving it to, than had the Laughing Flame.

If Talana was unwittingly the first being to draw wizards from distant lands together in a gathering

that gave them a sense of community (even though her club and the fairs were so feeble and rivalry-ridden that spies of various rulers, sent to investigate this possibly world-shaking peril, laughingly dismissed any thought of peril to thrones and even to the authority of village elders), Eirl Rauthantannar was the first to give magelings the tools they needed to teach themselves, in a careful sequence of spells of ascending power.

Dorgon had carefully taught this or that mage a few spells in passing, as his heart moved him, but Eirl saw the growth in power of mages everywhere—not a group of mages working together, but individuals, "all across the wide face of Faerûn"—as a beneficial counterbalance to the tyranny of bad rulers and overly powerful clergies. Accordingly, he began to watch over a lot of mages who were not ruled by ambition or given to casual cruelty, and steered them with the spells he gave them into lives of study, personal safeguarding, and keeping low public profiles.

He dreamed of a day when every town and village in Faerûn would have too many mages for any one wizard to dominate or mistreat others, or any ruler to slay, capture, or enlist them all.

Eirl's nickname came from his increasingly hoarse, thin voice. As he aged, it became more ragged, until he sounded as if he was always whispering loudly. Aware of this, he became a man of few words and would often loom out of the darkness to deliver a single sentence or a handful of words of advice to mages—wherefore a forgotten sage dubbed him "Whisperer," and others took up the nickname.

Eirl grew frail and wracked by diseases as he aged, and saddened by the deaths of wizards he had aided early on in his life. When melancholy loneliness took the last of his energy, Eirl laid himself down to fertilize barren ground with his body, in one last act to restore the bounty of the land. More is said of this in the chapter on "Mystra's Choice." Today, Eirl's vitality has become Greentree Haven, an enchanted grove in the midst of a vast forest.

Ergrith Klavulgrun

("Kingslayer")

(reigned 276–278 DR)

Offered the office of the Magister by Azuth, the proud and blustering seized its power eagerly, immediately setting forth to slay three mages he had feared and spied on for years. His triumphs were swift and brutal (he petrified the arms of one mage and then shattered them, leaving the man to bleed to death, and his battering-ram spell slammed shut a heavy door on the head of another). Taking the magic of his three victims as his own, Ergrith went into seclusion for a winter to master

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it, and in the spring went hunting possible rivals again.

Turned back from slaying a court mage by a Tashlutan lord, Ergrith announced that henceforth kings would do well to kneel before mages, rather than the other way around—and then proceeded to furnish Faerûn with a reason why. He slaughtered more than a dozen lords of independent cities in the Vilhon and the Tashalar before his bloody deeds and nickname alerted Calishite rulers to their increasing peril—and Ergrith found himself hunted by a hastily assembled “flight” of wyvern-riding, wand-wielding mages, armed with all the magic their sponsors could spare. Private fears among the sponsors that their cure might ultimately be more dangerous to them than the Magister were dashed when Ergrith destroyed most of his attackers in a month-long running battle of chases, hide-and-seek involving shapeshifting, and long days of immobility spent hiding in the shapes of dead trees, stone pillars, and even as a mausoleum in a walled “tomb garden” in a Tashlutan city.

Many graveyards of Faerûn have their tales of talking tombstones, but it is known that Ergrith the Kingslayer fled from his stony disguise when a dozen of the mages hunting for him congregated in the burial garden—and that they then pursued him north across most of the lands bordering the Sword Coast, until they attacked a black dragon flying not far from the waves, mistaking it for the Kingslayer having taken dragon-shape. The dragon slew many of the mages, and Ergrith took the shape of one of those fallen, successfully hiding among his pursuers in the confusion of battle as they destroyed the wyrm and began a vain hunt for their missing quarry.

One by one, the Kingslayer stealthily caught the wizards alone and slew them, until the last one hung screaming in torment, transfixed on huge stabbing talons born of one of Ergrith’s last spells. The Kingslayer taunted his foe, but unfortunately ignored his whereabouts: forested lands not far inland from Neverwinter, where elven villages lived peacefully in an alliance with a handful of human crafters and a sorceress, Adriyana. The elves called her “Leaf in the Wind” because of her habit of turning herself into a leaf with eyes and blowing about the lands observing the doings of birds and hares as well as orcs, deer, prowling owlbears, and worse. On this occasion, she witnessed Ergrith’s cruelty and was so appalled that she took her own shape and challenged him on the spot.

He sneered at her tears, ragged clothing, and back-country speech—but the spells left to him were so few and her attack so furious that he was overwhelmed, and perished when she turned his last, nastiest slaying-spell back on him. Thus, the gentle Adriyana became Magister.

Adriyana Voudsarr

(“Leaf in the Wind”)

(reigned 278–292 DR)

Little interested in dominating other mages or acquiring more magic, Adriyana was not seen in wider Faerûn for some years after gaining the office of the Magister. This did not displease rulers and wizards alike, who still had wounds to heal and power to rebuild in the wake of the Kingslayer’s cruelties. For some years they let Adriyana alone, and she used the time and her newfound powers to thoroughly train local elves and humans who showed any promise in the Art, teaching them her love of the land and the cycles of life that flourished in her beloved forest alongside the matters of incantations, material components, and how the one must be varied to “keep the magic from spilling out” when the other is of necessity changed.

The time came at last when emboldened mages began to appear above the peaceful pondside forest hut that Adriyana called home and issue challenges. She refused to accept most of them, and her challengers usually made the mistake of despoiling nearby trees and forest creatures to goad her into battle, rather than just striking at her with spells—and thereby earned themselves her full fury. She prevailed in more than a dozen contests ere her defeat of Blaemar of Athkatla, wherein his flames destroyed so much of her forest and its folk that the sickened Adriyana pleaded with Mystra to be removed from office, offering to exchange her own life for some sort of restoration of the devastated woodlands. Mystra offered her distraught Magister several choices, and undertook the restoration regardless—and Adriyana turned herself into *Adriyana’s Garter*, a powerful artifact detailed in the chapter titled “Mystra’s Choice.”

Nasana Melnuthquel

(“The Princess Terrible”)

(reigned 293–297 DR)

Offered the office of the Magister by Azuth on the eve of her ascendance to the throne of Procalith, a now-vanished city of the Tashalar that was swept away in a sorcery-driven storm some centuries later, this proud but witty and easily amused young lady accepted the title, installed her lover on the throne as a puppet ruler, and entertained herself by traveling Faerûn, dropping in on mages wherever she caught sight of their towers, announcing herself as “Mystra’s anointed Magister” and demanding a trade of spells (usually “two for two”). Her very boldness caught unprepared many wizards who might otherwise have trapped and enslaved her—though she was forced to flee frantically at least twice—and before she met with



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someone who might have slain her outright, she happened to visit the tower of Ilitmur Auglad, a refugee of lost Netheril, who was slowly dying as magic that had kept him alive for thousands of years slowly failed. Improbably, affection and then deepening love was born between the two, and they dwelt together for some years before an archwizard seeking to challenge Nasana for the office of the Magister found Auglad's tower.

The ancient Netherese had become more a creature of magic than of life by then, his enfeebled limbs held upright by magic. The challenger easily blasted him to dust. Arriving from the depths of the tower too late to save her beloved, Nasana took a terrible revenge on the challenger-mage, smashing his body with spells and then keeping him alive for days as she inflicted brutal manglings upon it. He was reduced to little more than bloody shapelessness in the end, and as she burned him to ashes and conjured up a wind to blow those ashes away, Nasana coldly began to plan the scouring of mages across Faerûn that won her the nickname bards still remember with awe.

The Princess Terrible hunted wizards from the Spine of the World to the jungles of Chult, and from the Nelanther to the Plains of Purple Dust, slaying and destroying without mercy masters and even the least of servants, familiars, and apprentices, taking what magic she could salvage after they were dead as her own (but caring nothing for preserving it as she fought them). She came at last back to the throne of Procalith, where she discovered that her lover had taken a wife, Osalra, who had some minor skill at magic.

Overcome by rage, she struck down Osalra—and dropped dead of heartstop in the doing. As her body rolled down the steps of the throne, a minor courtier named Sabral Faryre darted forward to set it afire with a spell and loudly proclaim himself Magister. His first act was to slay Nasana's onetime lover, and then he declared himself also King of Procalith.

Sabral Faryre, King of Procallith

(reigned for six days in 298 DR)

A tall, agile, handsome courtier of great acting ability, quick wits, and pleasant speech, Sabral wasted no time in consolidating his rule: He had all of his rivals at court, and the only influential warriors in the city guard, executed in front of him. The cowed populace was then ordered to yield up to him certain persons of the city (and to hunt them down if they tried to hide or flee, on pain of their own lives being forfeit) that Sabral knew to have magical ability. When five of these were brought to him (the sixth leaped to his death from a parapet, fearing slow torture and slavery at the king's hands), Sabral named them his Council of Lords and

Ladies, and sat down with them to earn their trust and to teach them some spells from his meager store, requesting they surrender some useful magic of their own to him and their fellow Lords in return.

Sabral explained that he did not want to be a tyrant, but understood that a harsh beginning was necessary to win the respect of the populace—and that he intended to hand the rule of Procalith over to them, concerning himself with being Magister, but watching to see that none of them betrayed the others or the code of laws he intended to forge for the city.

It is not known if any of the five believed him, for Sabral was found mere days later dead on his own throne, a huge harpoon driven through his torso and the grand chair in which he sat—a deed that could only have been accomplished by a titan, a giant, or someone using magic to wield the mighty weapon.

Lady Mimiré of the Council proclaimed herself Magister upon making the grisly discovery, but Mystra seems not to have heard her, for no powers came to her, and it was likely that Azuth had already conferred the office of the Magister on another. Mimiré and the throne both disappeared that same night, and it was twenty years before her mummified body was found in a secret passage of the palace, pinned under the heavy Great Seat of Kings. Her slayer was probably an ambitious fellow Councilor—but the city guard saw to it that not one of them survived a tenday longer, and the rule of Procalith passed out of sorcerous hands forever.

Malkith Undree

("The Smiling Cat")

(reigned 298–302 DR)

A soft-spoken, always smiling mage who left Halruua because he wanted to be free of rules regarding the use of magic and accomplished archmages watching his doings to make sure those rules were kept, the superior but always polite Malkith struck fear into the hearts of many mages. He truly seemed to know everything, perhaps because he spent a lot of time magically spying, was a shrewd judge of character, and devoted his idle time to anticipating outcomes and considering consequences. He always had plans clear in his mind about what to do if this or that occurred, and he adopted them without hesitation, his faintly smiling public facade never faltering.

Malkith was living in a backstreet rooming house in a city in the Vilhon when Azuth appeared to him, and he seemed to be occupied then with learning all he could about local trade (presumably seeing how he could best enrich himself while undertaking the least amount of actual work).

Upon becoming Magister, he used spells to take over



a caravan coster and a moneylending business in Amn, and devoted himself to watching other mages, swooping in to seize the magic of the dead or dying, and revealing the work of those he considered potential rivals to their enemies, so as to keep all mages of consequence busy with everything that did not involve plotting or preparing against their Magister.

One mage said Malkith reminded him of a "wild-fed, contented cat looking down his nose at the world," and the quote stuck. Without ever leaving the trail of bodies most Magisters do, he managed to become hated and feared as few Magisters have done, before or since. Perhaps it was his silken politeness, or the widespread knowledge that he watched what other wizards were doing nearly all the time. Perhaps it was his love of manipulating nonmages all over Faerûn, to set forces in motion that would cause events that would in the future make him richer . . . or just please him because he had managed to bring them about.

Whatever the cause, Malkith was feared even by clergy of Mystra. When he beheaded himself by causing an ancient enchanted scepter to explode, no one quite believed he was dead. Long after a new Magister was walking Faerûn, the headless body of the Smiling Cat stood fused to the floor of his tower in the Star-spire Mountains, in a room where the very stones had melted and then hardened again, like glass, around the frozen fragments of a scepter that was no more. It was almost seven years before adventurers dared to enter the tower—and set off the Smiling Cat's "death chain" of linked *meteor swarm* spells that blew them apart, along with the tower and all of its contents. From time to time, strange blue glows still flicker around some of the stony fragments that were once Malkith's Tower, but no one has yet found anything useful in its scattered rubble. Of course, that does not stop band after band of adventurers from looking.

Oldo Tappard

(reigned 302–316)

This tall, gaunt maker of animated toys had graduated to crafting golems long before Azuth appeared to him in his workshop. Fearful of his eventual fate but fascinated by the possibilities of acquiring a lot of magical power almost overnight, Oldo accepted the office of the Magister and promptly set to work crafting spells that would enable him to speak and cast spells through his golems. The moment he had a crude measure of control over one of his automatons, he sent it to visit a temple of Mystra and began the process of spreading the story that his body had been so badly damaged in an early sorcerous battle that he now encased it in golems of his own making, and stalked about the Realms in a variety of constructed bodies.

The ruse served his purposes: No less than twenty golems were destroyed by the attacks of ambitious would-be Magisters over the years that followed, and Oldo patiently hunted down and slew each and every one of these mages, waiting until they were asleep, sick, occupied in casting something intricate, or even fighting another mage before he appeared and launched a deadly attack. Whenever questioned, he always gave a false name and announced that he was "hunting the evil Magister!"

Oldo loved children and never stopped making toys for them or stealthily leaving spell scrolls and potions for wizards who were the parents of infants or youngsters. The old toymaker finally died of a wasting disease in 316 DR, having first sent his golems to "tear down the doors" of several schools of wizardry, so that "all could enter in, and learn." The secrets of his career in office were revealed in a scroll delivered to Candlekeep by one of his golems. Several mages desired to obtain the golems and try to derive Oldo's spells from them—but one by one (probably by the actions of Mystra's servants), in the tenday following his death, they all simply . . . disappeared.

Iolaeden Stonehallow

("The Firedragon")

(reigned 316–318 DR)

Winning her nickname for her long, unruly, flame-hued hair, her matching temper, and her habit of using spells that allowed her to gout forth red dragon breath, Iolaeden was an orphan girl from somewhere in the Vilhon kept as a kitchen-slave in Calimshan. One day she grew weary of scrubbing pots and scalding herself in dirty dishwater, and climbed a roof drainpipe up to the rich bedchambers at the top of the house. She had never seen them—or any other part of the house—before and had no idea that most houses did not come furnished with spellbooks. She did, however, know that she was not supposed to be in the room, and when she heard laughter fast approaching the other side of its closed door, she was out the window, with the book, in a trice. She spent that night on the roof, reading by moonlight, cast her first amazed spell just before dawn, and then hid the book under the rafters and went back to being a scullery-slave. By the time the theft of the book was discovered, Iolaeden had learned enough to know that discovery of her secret would mean her death, so she studied in secret from then on, behind the kitchen midden, and never reentered the bedchamber. She crept forth by night to adjacent houses to practice casting spells, and began to use her magic to aid other slaves and servants against their masters.

She was yet young, and still limited in her Art (though she had mastered most of the spells in the book,



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to the point where she could cast them with casual skill), when Azuth appeared to her in the kitchens, in front of the astonished staff (after first gliding through the grand rooms of the house, dumbfounding the family who dwelt there) and offered her the office of the Magister.

Knowing what her fate would be if she refused, the confused and reluctant Iolaeden accepted—and promptly found herself under attack from a swift series of ambitious would-be Magisters. She could not understand how it was that she survived the battles that followed, wherein she was clearly overmatched, and fumbling rather than deft in her own castings... but she suspected that Azuth, or perhaps Mystra, was watching over her and guarding her.

The truth was less prosaic: A human mage had located her, developed a necromantic spell that enabled him to trace her by means of her hair, and was masking himself with *improved invisibility* as he cast spells in her defense. Buoyed by her seeming invulnerability, Iolaeden indulged her natural character and set out to strike at mages before they could strike at her. Someone always shielded for her and occasionally fought against other mages on her behalf, always remaining

unseen. She battled and slew more than forty mages in her years as Magister—until the day came when her mysterious partner decided she had eliminated the only wizards he had to fear as rivals. He slew Iolaeden with casual ease and proclaimed himself Magister.

The Firedragon lives on today in Mystra's service, often materializing as herself to gleefully join in spell-battles. The goddess of magic has plans for her that are as yet secret even from Iolaeden herself.

Loaradden Dervilr

(reigned 319–321 DR)

Serving as Iolaeden Stonehallow's unseen defender for two seasons until they had together vanquished all of his rivals, this patient, coldly cruel man dared to attack temples of Oghma, Deneir, and other gods in search of magic he could master. Mystra threw up impregnable *walls of force* in his path whenever he approached any temple—including her own—after his first four-day-long foray into temple pillaging, but Loaradden seemed unafraid of this divine prohibition and turned his attention to slaying every last worker-of-Art he could find, young and old, feeble or novice or even Art-less sage.



Mystra did not tolerate this for long. Loaradden's magic deserted him when he was slaying his way through tower guards to reach the treasure-vault of the powerful mage Onsilur Maerdrathom of Sheirtalar, and he tumbled into the courtyard he was flying over. Onsilur blasted his groaning body to shards, smoke, and ashes before his broken bones had time to cause him all that much pain.

Onsilur Maerdrathom

("The Ruling Magister")
(reigned 321–326 DR)

Upon becoming Magister, Onsilur wasted no time in trying to set to rights (as he saw it) affairs in the Tashalar, forcing all local rulers to give mages legal protection and standing, and quelling the worst of their disputes and skirmishing. Though they all saw the wisdom of peace (allowing each land and independent city to prosper), none of them liked being dictated to by a mage—or having all mages given special status that would allow them to continue being headaches for every local throne for years to come.

So several of the rulers covertly hired mages of Mulhorand and nearby lands to destroy the upstart "Ruling Magister." These ambitious wizards attacked Onsilur separately and with varying degrees of success, in a series of strike-and-flee duels that finally ended when one of them, Ansel Burwyth ("Master of Gems"), cast a spell that trapped Onsilur inside a *kiira* (an elven lore-gem).

Ansel promptly hid the gem in a safe place, and went to Onsilur's Liongirt Tower to pillage it of magic—only to be destroyed by its defensive spells.

No one knew of his end or the fate he had inflicted on the Ruling Magister, and it was some years before local rulers became emboldened enough to return to their former ways, and some years later still before the Liongirt Tower was successfully plundered. This was not for lack of trying. The tower claimed the bones of dozens of mages before Onsilur's library was breached, and a score or so more hopeful wizards before the emptied tower started to crumble. The seedy, crowded neighborhood of Sheirtalar that now stands where once the walled gardens of the Liongirt Tower served as home to growling, prowling lions still has a reputation for hidden *teleport* links and unexpected, spontaneous spell-triggerings.

Ansel's hiding place proved safe indeed—so safe that the gem has never been found. Onsilur went insane in the end, losing the office of the Magister, and remains inside the gem, raving, to this day. The whereabouts of the gem remain unknown, and even the name of its owning elven family has been forgotten in conflicting remembrances and the chaos of Myth Drannor's fall—

but sages who study such things (sponsored by mages hoping to gain possession of the gem) believe the gem is part of a small hoard of enchanted jewels that still lies hidden somewhere in the Dragonreach lands.

Gelthin Hornreach

("The Missing Magister")
(reigned 326–337 DR)

Offered the office of the Magister by Azuth, Gelthin accepted and lost no time in hiding. A backstreet crafter of potions and amulets in Calimport—and a good one; his work had earned him the best understanding of magical forces of any mage alive at the time—Gelthin was born somewhere in the Sword Coast North, and went back to that region in search of a safehold in which to hide.

Finding a tomb from some fallen kingdom, he dwelt therein, striking a bargain with a vampire who dwelt in a tomb nearby. Gelthin used spell-visions and expeditions after treasure to lure adventurers and soldiers to the area, and the vampire destroyed them. Many folk believed Gelthin to be a lich, and his infamy grew. Few even among the most inquisitive mages suspected he was the "Missing Magister" many ambitious archwizards were seeking.

Gelthin desired only to continue his magical experiments, trying to craft spells that could be boosted in effects by the presence of amulets worn by the caster for their own different powers and purposes. He cached clear records of his researches, though he achieved little, but did not volunteer this lore to other mages—and there came a time when an experienced battle-mage penetrated Gelthin's lair (seeking the "rich old magic" of a powerful lich), found the reclusive Magister bent over his amulets, and destroyed Gelthin in mid-murmur.

Hortil Droone

(reigned 337–345 DR)

By slaying Gelthin, this veteran warrior mage-for-hire became the Magister. The cruel, quick-witted Hortil quickly used his newfound powers to dispose of some hated, long-standing rivals, and then promptly faked his own demise, changed his name and appearance, and hid in one of the cities on the shores of the Shining Sea, posing as a wealthy merchant. To support his fictitious identity, "Nelver Kulcharvin" invested in several local costers and a barrelworks, and then promptly ignored the outside world for some years. He spent this time building his own magical skills, and after some years of covertly acquiring spells and improving a few of them was struck by the thought that the Magister ought to do something. So he prayed to Mystra for guidance, and she sent Azuth to lay before him the uncomfortable fact



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that Magisters served their goddess best who spread magical knowledge energetically around Faerûn.

Fired with the enthusiasm of a new purpose, Hortil prepared spell scrolls and a scheme for slowly introducing a lot of useful magic to twenty or more novice mages. Then he set about finding suitable students by posing as a traveling carnival "flash spells" hedge-wizard, and playing with children from his audiences after each performance. This revealed a handful of candidates, a few of whom had an interest in magic that was greater than their fear. Hortil kept at this process, now using the name "Immgar Orlam," until his secret pupils had grown to more than two dozen. Unfortunately, he became smitten with one of the oldest and most beautiful of his female apprentices, and a local sorceress noticed him visiting her. This mage, Phambra Chalyphar, started to spy on the busy Orlam, soon deduced he was a mage of great power with access to armloads of spell scrolls, and decided to "slay and seize."

She planned her attack in meticulous detail, complete with hired archers to prevent an escape, and struck when Hortil was tired, distracted, and unprepared. The few spells he had ready were no match for Phambra's barrage of death-dealing magic, and Hortil lost his life and the office of the Magister together.

Offered Mystra's Choice, he pleaded with the goddess to let him somehow continue on with his teaching, "even as a ghost," but she gave governance of his pupils to others among her servants, and instead made Hortil several offers of fates. From among them he chose to become *The Crown of the Undying Flame*, a royal crown of Westgate (described in the chapter of this sourcebook titled "Mystra's Choice"), within which his sentience still survives.

Phambra Chalyphar

("The Laughing Doom")

(reigned for six months in 345 DR)

A wasp-tongued, malicious creature governed by her ambition and her hatreds of all who "knew too much about her," this sorceress was Magister just long enough to slay two wizards, seize the keep of one of them to be her own, and pass on some of the other's magic to one of his apprentices, so as to "keep Mystra happy" that she was spreading magic to others. She lost her first duel against a wizard of real experience and power, who knew what she was, calmly prepared to defeat her, and goaded her into reckless rage.

Phambra had glossy black hair and stunning good looks, which she retains as a shadowstaff who delights in appearing as a warning vision to mages of today. She often attends MageFairs to see all the young wizards—and gives some of them heart-chilling frights when the

sorceress they thought to seduce turns to mockingly laughing nothingness in their hands. Her nickname comes from this recent, anonymous career rather than from her time as Magister.

Arghorst Talandor

("The Tall")

(reigned 345–404 DR)

An impressive, well-spoken mage who made and used *potions of longevity* as well as building a fortune through covertly selling such things to nonmages, Arghorst "the Tall" slew the Magister Phambra and thereafter avoided violence, retaining office by being the first Magister since Dorgon to become truly beloved by a wide variety of wizards. He did so by helping all mages he met, freely giving them spells, and rebuking or denying them in only one thing: aid that would allow them to "waste their Art" in attacking each other. He mediated disputes between wizards, started many on their careers by dropping in without warning to fix spells they were having trouble with, showing them how to modify magic, and something of why . . . and in so doing earned the gratitude of many mages.

While in office, Arghorst devised the enchanted helms that bear his name (described at the end of the "Magisterial Magic" chapter in this book). Now one of the most valued of Mystra's shadowstaves, occasionally empowered by the goddess to retain to Faerûn as a solid, living, breathing mage for a day at a time to guide a mage of promise who has insight enough to pray to the goddess for guidance, Arghorst lost the office of the Magister when one of his pupils finally took advantage of his good nature to run him low on spells—and then challenge him. It is said that the dying Arghorst praised his slayer's casting technique.

Anaslas Raldimmar

("Doomwing")

(reigned 404–407 DR)

The slayer of Arghorst the Tall was a sharp-featured, handsome young wizard whose nickname comes from his love of taking the form of a giant, black-feathered hawk by day or owl by night and hunting human prey. He despised "brutish warriors" and did his best to rid the Realms of as many of them as had the misfortune to displease him. He never chased dutiful guards or common armsmen, but rather those who sought to rule or whose swagger outstripped their rightful authority.

Hunting swiftly became Anaslas's obsession, and he started to spend his days in hawk-form, which in the end made him easy prey for the sorceress Eleedra, who took the shape of a boorish warlord and then turned to the shape of a giant wasp when Doomwing stooped and struck at her. He impaled himself on her stinger, and she



pierced him through and through before he could master his agony. Then she shapechanged again into an argos of many jaws and claws—and tore him apart.

Eleedra Nathchant

(reigned 407–409 DR)

An ardent hunter after men for different purposes from those of her predecessor, the sleek and witty Eleedra spent her days as Magister not in pursuit of greater magic, but in seducing important rulers up and down the Sword Coast. She had a vague idea of influencing all the men smitten with her to do her bidding, ruling informally and secretively through love. She used her spells to slay those who defied her charms or showed no signs of love for her.

Eleedra's passing came through carelessness born of too much success and too little magic, for too long. Lazy, overconfident, and armed with paltry spells, she died in a duel when challenged by a wizard who had been hired by one fearful ruler (Irgult Wheivron, Lord of the city of Narubel) to take his shape and wait in his bedchamber for a prearranged liaison.

Eldrus Wands

(reigned 409–516 DR)

The slayer of Eleedra was a man who always looked to his own defenses first and employed many guises and homes in a calmly random life of hiding and moving about the Realms, aided by his early discovery of some usefully located *gates* (which allowed him to easily range up and down the Sword Coast, and also jump swiftly from there to the Vilhon) and a wizard's tower plundered of all but two chests full of potions, including several *potions of longevity*. Eldrus took lovers wherever he went, and set each of these ladies up in a cottage as a soothsayer and seller of magical curios. After he had moved on, Eldrus liked to magically spy on the ladies he had abandoned. Often he would anonymously leave new stock (minor enchanted items, such as *continual light* lamps, or scrolls containing new spells of his devising) on their doorsteps, aid them with coins when need be, and slay those who offered them harm. To each who conceived during their time together, Eldrus sent dreams, telling them what to name their children, both given name and surname—and these children swelled the ranks of what was to become the famous Waterdhavian family, strong in sorcery, that bears the name of Wands.

It was Eldrus who found a spelljamming ship, wrecked in the Wood of Sharp Teeth, and piloted it to a resting place in the depths of the Lake of the Long Arm, just for fun, and Eldrus who tore apart the fortress of Soraev of Athkatla to convince him to free the treants he was experimenting on (in hopes of creating an army of

powerful warriors whom he could plant, without need for food, pay, or barracks, when they were not needed). Eldrus Wands was also the man who somehow pilfered a spell from Candlekeep, *Evard's black tentacles*, and made many scrolls of it that he sold around the Realms for handfuls of coppers, posing as an overly simple adventurer down on his luck.

Many standing stones all over the Realms are the work of Eldrus: When he came upon mages being needlessly harsh or cruel, he sometimes turned them to stone right where they stood, and then used a second spell to sheathe them in more stone to protect them from the elements, to disguise the origin of the stone by changing its appearance, and to keep those he imprisoned from being freed by a single, inadvertent *dispel magic* (which unsheathes one of his statue-stones, but does not free the petrified mage under that covering).

Despite using several magical means to ensure his own longevity, Eldrus became a wrinkled, good-natured old man, loving jests more than coins or high station, and doing kindnesses with his magic. So good was he at hiding his true nature that no mage ever found him to tender a challenge—and he died at last of heartstop, fever, or exposure as he wandered, sick and raving, alone in the winter snows near present-day Hill's Edge.

Thardon Ilvynner

(reigned 516–522 DR)

This white-haired, sickly-looking man had a natural affinity for the Weave and could make energies crackle around his fingertips at will without need for casting a spell. He ascended to mighty heights of magecraft in the waning years in office of Eldrus Wands, but saw little point in hunting a Magister who obviously did not want to be found—only to gain a life of being in turn hunted by other mages. Instead, he contented himself with building his strength, foreseeing a time when whelmed companies of mages would not be able to stand against him. He also foresaw that cabals and networks of mages lay in Faerûn's future, and he desired no part of such organizations, or that they should flourish while he yet had breath to stop them.

Thardon's expertise was in the training of griffons and other aerial mounts, and he neglected some sorcery to revel in hunting down wild griffons, taming and training them alone and with minimal use of magic. When Azuth offered him the office of the Magister, he accepted it only reluctantly, because its powers would help him survive the research needed for his last work, the *Treatise on Monsters Known and Unknown*, whence comes much of the useful (as opposed to fanciful) information about the more dangerous creatures of Faerûn. Thardon grew in successes, pride, and precariousness



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of sanity together, until he was quite erratic (and dangerous to be in the company of, given his habit of suddenly lashing out with destructive spells). It was with some relief that wizards across Faerûn heard of his downfall at the hands of a hitherto unheralded mage who was to become known as "the Magister Morglond."

Morglond Iltrilune

(reigned 522–527 DR)

This shy, coldly calculating man was thin, tall, and dark, and always seemed lost in thought—or irritably aroused from such a state, favoring those nearby with a stare that held the clear desire to swiftly destroy whatever had distracted him. He customarily stood stock still, so many folk who did not look directly at him dismissed him as a rock or a tree trunk until they came to the sudden realization that a wizard was standing looking at them.

These mannerisms were but an act. Morglond, born of a proud old Sheirtalan family, was so brilliant that he could simultaneously fight with spells, carry on a genial conversation, observe doings elsewhere by means of a scrying glass, and thoroughly ponder the consequences of his own actions and news of the deeds of others. Spells of his creation involving extradimensional spaces and the dimensional warping of creatures and items in the "here and now" are widely used by wizards today, and increasingly he was awed and entranced by the beauty of magic in its various forms and guises—and repelled by the self-serving and lazy acts of wizards employing it (humans in particular).

In the end, Morglond asked Mystra for release from all contact with human mages, saying he could no longer serve such grasping worms—and yet he knew she would be displeased if he started slaughtering them out of hand. The goddess gave him a choice of fates, and he turned himself into a *gate* (of which more is said in the chapters "Mystra's Choice" and "The Road of Stars and Shadows") that allowed him to observe, and feed from, those using him for transport.

For centuries Morglond seemed content to watch the spellhurling world go by . . . but his whimsy, boredom, or growing insanity may well be the source of occasional eruptions of random magical effects from *gates* here and there in Faerûn. The very idea of a sentient, hostile *gate* has been known to give Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun, just to name one archmage, severe headaches.

Tsjancy Ylldree

(reigned 528–531 DR)

A genial, smiling mage who seemed incapable of anger, this fat, scuttling little man was the most thorough magical researcher of his day. After accepting Azuth's offer of the office of the Magister, he began to wish he had

not, as mage after mage challenged him for the office, each encounter interrupting his work. In exasperation, he developed one of the most infamous "lost spells" of the office of the Magister (that is, gone with Tsjancy's passing, by the will of Mystra): the *feeblemind field*, into which he maneuvered most attackers. As each attacker was disabled, Tsjancy returned to his hobbies of making or hunting down strong cheeses and mustard pickles, eating same, and putting about crafting new spells.

He was finally captured by an ambitious mage who stunned him with a thrown rock bearing a *dispel magic field* spell (a variant of the familiar *dispel magic* that creates a "waiting" nullification field lasting some time, and surviving all magic short of a *limited wish*), and used Tsjancy's bemused state to manacle him by one arm and shoulder to a dungeon wall with the rock placed near enough to affect him but just beyond his straining reach. Then Tsjancy was tortured, his hitherto free hand being crushed in a wooden vice. His captor desired to learn all the secrets of a long list of specific spells.

The smiling Magister refused to yield any information despite the pain, and there came a time when his exasperated captor left him briefly, to see to other pressing affairs. Tsjancy promptly severed his own arm with a hidden boot-knife to be free of the manacle. He nearly fainted, but managed to stagger out of the range of the *dispel stone*, turn himself into a serpent, and glide out of the cell between the bars.

The withered, bony arm dangling from its dungeon manacles is all that is left of Tsjancy today. There are sages who insist that application of the correct spells would free the arm to crawl on its fingertips around a sharply limited area, manipulating magic, moving items, and slaying certain creatures—including all wizards.

The maimed Magister hid from that moment on, employing all the useful magic he knew or could seize in an attempt to shield himself from discovery by mages. He managed it for some months, but in the end was slain by a wizard who used a "spellseeking worm" spell to seek out Tsjancy and thereby win the office of the Magister.

Urboltar Highymhelver

(reigned 531–537 DR)

Tsjancy's slayer was an ambitious, ruthless man of middling height and nondescript features who thought he could rise to rule all Faerûn by whelming orc hordes and steering them to attack his enemies. If he could be Magister, Urboltar thought, he could compel mages to help him, or use his magical powers to cause another Flight of Dragons, or Rage of Dragons, to plunge down on his foes.



Of course, conceiving such grand dark schemes is far easier than executing them. Urboltar never found a means of compelling anyone to do anything, but he did find a man-high enchanted mirror. What befell next is described in the popular ballad *Ever Is Weather*, of which the relevant lines follow:

*He looked in the mirror, and what did he see?
He saw a spell storm coming for dark lords three.
One to hurl cold winds, one to crack the sky,
One to drag all mages down and make them, howling, die.
Look away, oh staring one, look away!*

For the rest of his days, Urboltar was haunted by his visions of three sinister figures whose long arms and bony fingers seemed to flow and change beneath tattered black cloaks. Some sages believe he saw Malau-grym, who was scrying him at the time of his scrutiny, while others insist the dark, tattered figures were those of the Imaskari or other ancient mages who had crafted the mirror and were now trapped within it, seeking to emerge by possessing the bodies of any living mages foolish enough to cast spells into the mirror.

Whatever the truth of the matter, Urboltar became plagued by nightmares that kept him sleepless, and

he was wracked by hallucinations. He ended his days a mumbling, staggering figure apt to hurl mighty spells at nothing or crawl under beds or huddle in closets to study spells secretly to replace those he had hurled. When a challenger finally hunted him down, the duel was a matter of only two spells, as a raving Urboltar howled curses and exhortations at his foe . . . but never cast a spell at all.

Tyvbolt Arsurath

(reigned 537–544 DR)

The man who slew Urboltar to seize the office of the Magister was an albino, a coldly thin-lipped, cruel, lonely man of brilliant wits and great hatred. He struck out at complete strangers with his spells if he disliked their looks, or if they offended him in any other trivial and unintentional way. Of course, he regarded any other being daring to use magic to be an insult to him, and he wasted no time in punishing such slights. Mages began to hide, designing ever more elaborate disguises, and to *teleport* gifts to his doorstep, hoping not to appease him so much as distract him.

One such gift was Chelathra, a beautiful female slave from the Calishite markets, and Tyvbolt was taken with her. In fact, he abandoned his mage-hunts



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to try to make her his assistant. When she showed no aptitude for casting magic, he altered her body with spells so that her arms contained wands, the effects of which she could fire from her palms by the appropriate gestures. He used more magic to heighten Chelathra's beauty and sought to embed even more powerful magical items within her, so that she could spit slaying spell effects from her mouth.

Seeking dragon blood and body parts for a spell, Tyv bolt almost casually attacked a mating pair of red dragons one afternoon, and a furious battle ensued. The Magister won that battle, but it left him weakened—so when a wizard arrived in its wake to challenge him, the Magister called on Chelathra to slay him from behind. Instead, she turned her magic on her master. Though Tyv bolt then destroyed her in maniacal fury, her attack left him so ravaged that the challenger easily defeated him.

Annath Sunfall

(reigned 544–576 DR)

Tyv bolt's slayer was a vigorous dreamer of a mage who planned to create a company of archmages with superior spells and special permanent magical powers (such as the ability to fly and employ *X-ray vision* at will), with himself at its head. They would govern over all mages and rulers to prevent abuses of magic, mitigate natural disasters, and strike down orc hordes and other scourges, ushering in a golden age of prosperity and stability for all.

Annath began to recruit suitably loyal and trustworthy wizards, beginning with his own apprentices, but his attempts to imbue them with permanent abilities failed, slaying some and twisting the bodies of others. As the survivors turned on him and sought to slay him, Annath destroyed them in despair, and went seeking "stronger, purer mages."

It took him years—and again, his attempts to instill magical abilities in his chosen wizards ended in disaster. Only a few died or were twisted into beast-shapes before the survivors turned on Annath, hunting him across Faerûn intending to destroy him. Annath led them to old traps he knew from his long-ago adventuring days, and to where he could reach magic he had cached long ago, and so slew them, one by one, until all were dead. Then he bitterly renounced all magic, crying out to Mystra that it was better that she be destroyed, the Weave fade away, and all men live by their thews or sink back to being beasts than that magic fail him repeatedly in achieving "such a bright dream."

The office of the Magister left him an instant later, and by Mystra's will, Annath was forced into a bitter and immediate choice. His unhappy fate (he lives on today as a wanderer, immune to magic and unable to use it, the touch of his grell-like body twisting even the

enchantments of magical items) is described in the chapter of this book titled "Mystra's Choice."

Alvaerele Tasundrym

("The Silent Chosen")

(reigned 576–592 DR)

A half-elven sage who concerned herself with healing and the health that careful eating, cookery, and use of herbs can bring to elves, humans, and half-elves (all of whom flourish when different needs are met), Alvaerele was a kindly wise-woman who dwelt in Zazesspur, teaching of spices and pantry-lore and how to make flavorful sauces to the wives of hungry merchants. She made and sold her own wines and sauces and was highly regarded in local society as a kindly, discreet woman who was always eager to help a matron with unexpected guests, or anyone with a digestive complaint—and had the means, skill, and forethought in accumulating materials to do so.

None knew that Alvaerele's secret hobby was learning magic, carefully and thoroughly mastering minor magics until she knew them back to front and could readily vary their components and effects. Iron patience kept her building her powers thoroughly and slowly, doing her castings in the forgotten underground crypt of a long-extinct local half-elven family—and it came as a great shock to Alvaerele and Zazesspan society at large when Azuth appeared to her, in the midst of the whirl and glitter of a grand feast she had been invited to (by a grateful hostess to whom she had supplied wagons of cheeses and rare vintages, on a day's notice) to offer her the office of the Magister.

It was even more of an astonishment when Alvaerele was promptly challenged by two different mages at the feast—and Azuth intercepted their spells, apologized for exposing her to such public peril, and made everyone in the hall forget everything that had occurred (the tale has come down from servants peering in through serving-hatches). The half-elven Lady Master of Many Kitchens accepted the office of the Magister, but said she was going to go right on cooking, making wines and sauces, and helping folk with herb-lore. Her trembling defiance of Azuth won his heart on the spot, and he watched over her attentively during her time in office, thrice warning her of impending attacks, and once causing a spell that was certain to have slain her to miss.

Alvaerele was obliged to travel to harvest herbs that did not flourish in her seaside gardens, and she was most vulnerable when on such forays. The mage Yalumvrael of Athkatla attacked her on one such trip, when she knelt in the High Dale to dig up mistflowers. He sat on a stone and shuddered, hunched over and acting as if he was ill. When she went to him to see what was wrong, he spat spell-born acid at her, in a gout that



would have blinded and disfigured her but for a shielding spell she did not remember raising (Azuth, of course, did it for her).

Alvaerele's reaction was swift: She turned the acid to water and made it an endless stream, and turned the mage whose mouth it was pouring from to stone. Yalumvrael sits there still, now buried in a hillside, but the stream born of the water that pours endlessly from his mouth is still known as Wizardgout Water. It runs down out of the mountains of the High Dale to water the rolling highlands north of Saerb.

Saddened by the deaths of too many clients she had helped to dine well through their lives, and by the increasing dooms she was forced to inflict on the ever more numerous challengers for her office, Alvaerele finally grew weary of being Magister. She asked Mystra if there was another way she could serve and was made a Chosen, charged with guarding such secrets as the whereabouts of the sleeping Srinsee, and tracing many human, elven, and half-elven families so that certain bloodlines not be lost.

Today, Alvaerele is seldom seen in public, preferring to work in many secluded places sacred to Mystra, and to take the shape of a shadowstaff or other creature when she must move or work openly. It was Alvaerele who recently destroyed a dozen ambitious Red Wizards of Thay who openly assaulted homes and shops in Velprintalar, seeking to draw the Simbul (who was busy elsewhere in Faerûn) out into a ring-of-beholders trap. The Silent Chosen sent the trap to ravage mages of Thay who were rivals of its creators, seeking—successfully—to cause violent internal dispute in that land.

Ozgor Hyelvel

("The Black Scourge")

(reigned 592–601 DR)

Awarded the office of the Magister by Azuth, this brute of a battle-mage is said to have grunted, "Saves me going to take it!" and continued with his warfare of the moment: storming a now-vanished town on the shores of the Vilhon at the behest of the petty tyrant who hired him (whose own neighboring town is now gone, too). By the turn of the year, Ozgor was slaying that same tyrant, at the behest of the man who had outbid the tyrant for the services of the Black Scourge.

Ozgor lived his entire adult life as a constant military campaign, always pillaging for stores (both magical and otherwise) to cache for later needs when he was not actually fighting. His various "black lightning" battle-spells earned him his nickname, and he left rich treasure stores behind for later mages. Whenever he gained magical items, spellbooks, spell scrolls, and the like that he considered excess to his needs of the moment, Ozgor cached them in some well-hidden spot for future use—and

returned to claim only a handful, so that caves (behind rock piles), cellars (behind false walls) and houses (in "dead space" above ceilings and behind paneling) contain all sorts of magical treasure, even to spellcrafting notes on unfinished magic, seized from mages he had slain. Ozgor's treasure caches contain little or no coinage or gems, because he was always in need of funds, but there is always magic, and often weapons of quality, too.

Ozgor lost his life and the office of the Magister together at the siege of a now-vanished adventurers' keep when Velgorn Kataclath, the wizard who led those adventurers, caught him totally off guard. Ozgor's first spell smashed open one wall of the keep, and in the roaring collapse of toppling towers that followed, the Black Scourge failed to notice the top of one turret go hurtling away at ground level, a cottage-sized, ungainly missile that quickly disappeared behind a nearby ridge.

As Ozgor and Velgorn traded *meteor swarms*, the turret followed the trajectory Velgorn had set for it: a long loop that brought it rushing back to the keep . . . and directly at the back of the Black Scourge. Amid the ground-shaking blasts of battle, Ozgor never heard it approaching—and was shattered to pulp when it struck him and whisked him straight into a collision with a waiting remnant of the castle wall.

Velgorn Kataclath

(reigned 601–607 DR)

This adventurer-mage won the office of the Magister in classical battle fashion, but had no particular desire to face a world of danger and constant spell-duel challenges. Velgorn was simply defending his home when he slew the incumbent Magister, and he had already decided to retire from adventuring (which he had grown weary of) and become a farmer and estateschall for the younger adventurers in his band, maintaining a base for them to return to, and using his own spells more sparingly and for gentler things.

Unfortunately, many mages had risen in both power and ambition during Ozgor's time in office, and they lost no time in showing up in swift, profuse succession to challenge the new Magister.

In the process, much of what Velgorn had come to love and settled down to protect was destroyed. He was soon forced to part from his sword-companions and flee elsewhere to draw the flow of destructive mages away from them.

Wearying of these constant duels, Velgorn prayed to Mystra for guidance. When she appeared to him, they had a long talk about magic, and he agreed to promote its wild side—imparting interest, hope, awe, and a reminder about the unpredictability of the Art, rather than reflecting its might-over-lesser-beings side—in a new existence that would allow him to see a lot of the



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passing world without having to struggle in its midst any longer. His choice was to become a metal flagon that radiates wild magic (detailed in the chapter titled "Mystra's Choice"), and in this form Velgorn lives on to this day.

Velomar Dauntcastle

("The Roaring Mage")
(reigned 607–612 DR)

Bold, genial, and bellowing, the fat and bearded figure of Velomar Dauntcastle lives on in many amusing tales told by bards late at night—tales of debauchery and oft-drunken pranks. The Roaring Mage's nickname came from his loud, boisterous manner and his habit of raucous singing—particularly when fighting with his fists, as he did often in taverns. He was not above donning voluminous ladies' gowns and mocking the speech and mannerisms of hypocritical society matrons who affected to be outraged by the "scandalous behavior" of certain persons they despised, only to indulge in even worse doings themselves, in private. Velomar would often magically eavesdrop on dishonest citizens and then magically broadcast their utterances in public where all could hear. He was hated and feared by the pompous and those of high station, and beloved by the common folk as their friend and champion.

Awarded the office of the Magister by Azuth in what Mystra once called "one of the High One's impish moments," Velomar proved to be the most enduring of the most ambitious mages of his day, outdueling his challengers with gusto. Becoming Magister changed him not at all, save that he drank less and paid a trifle more attention to keeping a fairly full roster of battle-spells memorized. He created variant *monster summonings* that brought him obedient swarms of stirges, giant wasps, and other mobile aerial creatures that he could use to confound other spellcasters, and then went right on swaggering and guffawing his way through life, in a career that had many moments typified by the tale that follows.

Velomar was once poisoned by a tavernmaster who hated wizards, and deliberately doctored the Roaring Mage's drink. Velomar lived, though he was reduced to trembling weakness for some months, and when he became Magister years later he lost no time in taking his revenge. Velomar crafted a new spell that had only one function: Whenever he quaffed a drink, an identical tipple appeared above the head of the tavernmaster—wherever and whatever the man was doing—and fell, drenching him.

Velomar died in a trap, stabbed through by over sixty sword-thrusts, when the husband of a lady he had seduced sent a dozen swordsmen to attack the Magister as he stood beneath her balcony and was kept busy casting spells to guard the lady from the dagger of her

own furious husband. The Roaring Mage caused the lady to be whisked back to her bedchamber, and the balcony to fall, smashing the vengeful husband and six of the swordsmen, but fell dead before he could deal death to the rest of his slayers.

Velomar lives on as a shadowstaff who is sometimes given a mortal body for a few days at a time to rescue and inspire young novice or would-be mages and train them in a few crucial spells before vanishing once more into the shadows. He often shouts and laughs with enthusiasm when thrust into such missions, and seems to afford Mystra as much entertainment as he does bards in search of colorful tales.

Irithra Dawntanthra

(reigned 612–641 DR)

Born on one of the tiny islets that nestle nigh Alaron in the Moonshaes, Irithra grew up as the only child of a sorceress who had fled from Calimshan because she did not want to marry the man her father had chosen for her. Irithra's mother, Calagrace, was a gentle woman saddened by the choice she had been forced to make, who spent much time using enchanted scrying globes to farscry deeds and events on mainland Faerûn. Quiet, solemn Irithra watched too, and became fascinated by magic and those who worked it, watching avidly and learning not only spells and their uses, but valuable lessons as to what mages should do, how they should guard themselves, and how they could best conduct themselves.

By the time Calagrace died of a winter fever, Irithra had become skilled in minor household magic and had been helping her mother for some time. Applying the lessons she had learned watching others, Irithra carefully built her own skills and experiences, often deliberately trying something she dreaded (such as taking on fish-shape and plunging into icy waters) to gain insights she felt she could not be without. This thorough, careful approach made her one of the most balanced mages of her time, able to really *use* all her spells in unexpected and inventive ways—because she understood them all so well.

She also devised her own magic, keeping always to the practical. One of these was the original *spelltouch*, a widely used and extremely useful dweomer.

When Azuth appeared to her, Irithra accepted the office of the Magister on her knees, with earnest queries as to how she could best serve his purposes and those of Mystra. The god answered fully and honestly—and she heeded, spending her days as Magister tirelessly traveling the Realms, dispensing spells, advice, and even "starter spellbooks" to all whom it seemed to her needed such things. Because she avoided aiding powerful, established mages, her work gave them competition



and aroused their enmity, and in the later days of her reign, Irithra faced many challenges.

Cool-headed and always prepared, with just another three tricks waiting up her sleeve, Irithra defeated many mages who might have been expected to best her in combat, and only fell at last when a duel forced upon her took her unwittingly right into the lair of a white dragon. She won the duel, but roused the wyrm in doing so—and barely survived its attack. Reeling out of the caverns sorely wounded, with the dragon dead behind her, Irithra almost literally flew into an adventurer-mage on his way to attack the dragon. Desperately she attacked, and he defended himself and struck back, slaying her.

Too late, he realized whom he had felled, as the office of the Magister came upon him. So it was that Dathchaunt came to office in remorse, with the body of the last Magister, a sorceress he had admired but not known the likeness of, lying broken in his arms.

Dathchaunt Sandrach

(reigned 641–657 DR)

The first Magisterial act of this tall, eagle-nosed, very serious man was to offer his life to Mystra, so that the woman he had just slain could rise again, Magister once more.

Mystra gently refused him, and requested instead his diligent service. When Dathchaunt asked how best to serve her, she replied that he must make his own decisions as to that, forging his own way as Magister. Confused, Dathchaunt wandered for a time and then began to visit temples of Mystra and of Azuth, asking to consult the eldest books of lore. He sought records of what earlier Magisters had done, and their fates, read all he could find . . . and in the end concluded that he must craft new magic and give it freely to other mages. Accordingly, Dathchaunt—who could think of many ends he would like to achieve with magic but had not an inkling of how to craft spells to achieve them—began crafting combination spells (which are explored in their own section of the “Magisterial Magic” chapter of this book), to achieve in the same casting two magical effects he did know how to wield, thus creating a new spell of sorts. He spent no time in personal defenses or in hunting rivals, but simply sat in his modest house crafting magic, and from time to time set out across Faerûn to hand scrolls of his latest spells to the weakest, youngest mages he could find.

Dathchaunt died in a violent summer storm, while experimenting with a *ball lightning* spell, when his work attracted three bolts from the heavens, which met in his body, vaporizing him in an instant. Azuth insists this was happenstance, not the work of any rival mortal or any deity . . . and that, in another form, Dathchaunt still serves Mystra to this day.

Jhesiyra Kestellharp

(reigned 658–667 DR)

An apprentice of Halaster Blackcloak who left him after Halaster’s test, Jhesiyra found her way to Myth Drannor, to (as she said) “see magic made mighty without the madness and twisted evil I have grown all too used to.” She dwelt in the City of Song for some years, studying Art with many masters, and almost single-handedly founded the idea that even great masters of magic have something to learn from their lessers, and that all wizards should therefore be pupils forever. One Cormanthian sorcerer said of Jhesiyra that she was “more a fierce flame, splendid in her energy, than a rose of placid beauty.” Another more plainly described her as “short, broad-shouldered, curvaceous more than muscular, with snapping dark brown eyes and lustrous light brown hair, worn long but curbed by magic into graceful shapes, never a flurry before her eyes or a tangle anywhere.”

When the office of the Magister came to her, Jhesiyra was already fascinated with the spell webs woven by many teams of elven mages. She seized upon her newfound power avidly, seeking to power a dream with it: the idea of the “arcanaweave,” a new type of spell web that would achieve a life and sentience of its own, continually regenerating spells as necessary, and moving and sensing its surroundings by itself. Arcanaweaves would be created to achieve specific purposes (such as tending the forest, destroying blighted growth and replanting trees wherever woodcutters, fires, and similar disasters had claimed any), and would work with unshakable loyalty for and with their creators. Arcanaweaves were the idea of elven mages before Jhesiyra ever came to Myth Drannor, but she gave their rather indolent experiments new fire and vigor, and took to binding herself into the spell webs and communing with them as well as directing them. She called this “riding the weft.”

One day, Jhesiyra Kestellharp was simply to be seen no more in Myth Drannor—nor anywhere else in Faerûn. Some say her onetime master Halaster snatched her back to imprisonment and death in torment, under his dark hand, but others insist she was gone before his dark depredations fell upon the City of Song, harvesting mages at will.

At least two elven mages who worked with her say Jhesiyra was binding herself to stronger and larger webs, sentient weaves that she allowed to draw on her power, and that they had last seen her in the heart of one spiderlike, hesitantly crawling web, “spreadeagled as if on a rack, surrounded by a glow of magic that pulsed and faded, like a dying firefly.” The web stalked off into the forest, where it may or may not have



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drained her utterly . . . and may or may not have grown into some new and strange creature. All that is certain is that sometime in the late summer of 667 DR, the office of the Magister passed to a new master—and that of Jhesiyra's fate, Mystra and Azuth say nothing.

Nerren Prentyuel

(reigned 667–669 DR)

A mage who dwelt in Lastarr in the far south of Faerûn, the calm, careful, shy, and soft-spoken Nerren was an unlikely Magister. He lacked the fame and the aggressive accomplishments of the leading mages of the day, and lacked much of the power of those who wielded magic in Myth Drannor—but he also lacked their scheming, ambitions, and diversions.

Day after month after year Nerren had plodded along carefully mastering spell after spell, having guaranteed himself riches by early on crafting a *slow cold* spell that enabled merchants to ship large chilled quantities of foodstuffs long distances without spoilage. (This early but important spell has now been both superseded and lost to magelore.) Most of Nerren's own magics were similarly useful, although he had begun creating some new and variant combination spells (detailed in the "Magisterial Magic" chapter of this book) by the time he received the office of the Magister.

Upon becoming Magister, Nerren prayed for guidance and had several long and frank discussions with Azuth as to what a Magister could be (the god refused to say what a Magister *should* be). Gathering that one of his tasks was to spread magic freely to others, but hating the idea of travel, Nerren hit upon an idea: create his own settlement whose every inhabitant would be his pupil.

Accordingly, he founded Liontongue (a hamlet that stood on the banks of the Liontongue River due west of present-day Lastarr). Liontongue grew to become a prosperous village of low-level mages, but has now completely vanished. Nerren was slain by five mages (one formally challenged him and the other four attacked from ambush once the duel was begun, happenings that again led Mystra and Azuth to modify how they treated imperiled Magisters), but destroyed them as he died, leaving the office of Magister vacant—and Liontongue leaderless. Its inhabitants, all emboldened by the spells they had mastered, fought among themselves. Some fled to dwell elsewhere after the conflicts turned bloody, many died, and the others were slain by brigands who had long hungered to pillage Liontongue's bounty. Within thirty years of Nerren's passing, only a few foundation stones remained to mark his "little gem of a dream."



Filverel Donnathlascen

(reigned 669–694 DR)

A moon elf who had journeyed to Myth Drannor to see great power, beauty, and the excitement of new and splendid things being crafted, Filverel soon left in disgust at the intrigues, decadence, and bitter behind-the-scenes feuding that many of the nonelven visitors to the city indulged in. He journeyed to remote areas in the foothills of the Storm Fangs (the southerly Thunder Peaks) to dwell alone and practice his magic unhindered. At first he found wilderness life hard, but at length he mastered both his own needs and an ever-increasing array of spells, both newly crafted (something he had a natural gift for) and derived from a spellbook he found in the mountain-cavern tomb of some ancient wizard of forgotten origin. The wizard's ghostly presence began to haunt Filverel, but seemed almost to aid and guide him after he demonstrated that he was interested in it, not afraid of it.

Filverel is remembered for crafting some variant combination spells (one of which can be found in the "Magisterial Magic" chapter), and for the (spell-assisted) "leaping boulder" traps with which he slew a surprisingly large number of mages who came to challenge him for the office of the Magister. He perished at the hands of the challenger "Firehands" in a spectacular aerial duel that destroyed several rocky pinnacles and was seen from afar (and misinterpreted by some as gods dueling on high).

Larongar Veverell

("Firehands")

(reigned 694–699 DR)

A gold elf cast out by his family due to his defiance of their wishes for his future and for what was appropriate behavior for an heir, Larongar was always a rebel. As handsome and as haughty as any human stereotype of "sneering, superior elves," Larongar turned his back on his kin almost happily and wandered the Realms, falling in with various adventurers and learning magic as he went (by betraying his human teachers and taking possession of their magic, some say).

He made more than his share of enemies, and created his own new surname (his original one is now forgotten, at least by humans) when he retired from the adventuring life to begin a series of careers as a magical tutor in human cities up and down the southerly Sword Coast. Displaying a natural aptitude for modifying the spells of others and for enchanting items, Larongar made large numbers of potions, daggers that bore minor magic, and—his masterworks—three magical staves that are reputed to bristle with many powers not usually found together.

A partial power list for just one of these staves survives (from an account written by a mage who saw Firehands practicing with the staff, and guessed at the abilities from what he saw). Some of these powers operated in the usual way (that is, the bearer could mentally activate them while grasping the staff), and these are thought to include: *cantrip, dancing lights, mount, unseen servant; continual light, darkness 15' radius, ESP, levitate; dispel magic, hold undead, item, tongues; illusionary wall, minor creation, polymorph other, wizard eye; hold monster, sending, stone shape, wall of stone; glassee, monster summoning IV, project image, repulsion; forcecage, prismatic spray, shadow walk, statue; maze, polymorph any object, prismatic wall, symbol; imprisonment, meteor swarm, temporal stasis, and time stop.*

The staff has other powers that it can use on its own (in some cases, only affecting itself) when mentally commanded from a distance of—probably—90 feet or less. These are known to include: *airy water, dig, dimension door, fly, passwall, spell turning, and telekinesis.*

Another one of Larongar's staves was said to create helmed horrors at a touch from small fragments of armor, and to be able to create clouds of whirling blades akin to the priest spell *blade barrier* but lasting only for moments.

After adventuring bands he believed to have been hired by his family began making persistent raids on Larongar's rented rooms (even after he moved, several times), Firehands crafted ribbons that bore *nondetection* spells of his own devising, wrapped them around his precious staves, and laid the weapons in caskets made from hollowed-out logs, which he hid in widely separated places across Faerûn.

Larongar's nickname derived from his love of using a spell (now believed lost to the Art) that conjured up a pair of man-high floating, grasping hands that blazed with flames and could be directed to attack foes of Firehands while he worked other spells.

Firehands was slain in a trap set by a beholder mage, who lurked in a ruin above the chamber where Larongar settled down to sleep, toppled the ancient ceiling beams onto the sleeping mage, crushing some of his limbs and pinning him, and then attacked with all of its magic through the breached ceiling, winning the office of the Magister with brutal speed.

Quaervaxthanus

(reigned 699–705 DR)

A beholder mage with a natural gift for creating and modifying spells, Quaervaxthanus was blinded in youth by an older eye tyrant who sought to slay all beholders of certain bloodlines—and almost managed to complete his task.

Quaervaxthanus, the maimed exception to the



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slaughter, fled for its life from the city of its birth and wandered wilderness backlands for years.

When it reappeared in eye tyrant society, Quaervaxthanus was a large and much-scarred beholder mage with a battery of wands and Netherese blast scepters grafted to the flesh of the socket that once held its central eye, and so ensorcelled that they were under the beholder mage's direct mental control. One of them seems to have been a *dweomer pantograph*, an item that could duplicate magical effects that struck it, allowing Quaervaxthanus to hurl a much wider variety of magic than are normally available to a beholder mage armed only with its spellstalks.

The beholder mage is believed to have created a more powerful variant of either the *unseen servant* spell or the *spectral hand* spell, creating a pair of strong but invisible arms that could carry items, wield weapons, and manipulate things for the eye tyrant from afar—but this spell and the magic that allowed Quaervaxthanus to control its array of wands were lost when the beholder mage was destroyed. The beholder mage is also known to have somehow gained possession of an enchanted pen that could duplicate spell scrolls.

In exchange for the spells cast into its *dweomer pantograph*, Quaervaxthanus traded many spell scrolls to certain reclusive human mages. After it became Magister, the beholder mage visited many fledgling elven mages. To those who did not attack it outright, Quaervaxthanus freely gave spell scrolls. Mages who came seeking Quaervaxthanus were blasted where they stood by the beholder mage, one of whose wands could fire a cone of whirling metal blades . . . and one of whose spells brought three boulders from elsewhere and sent them hurtling at a target point simultaneously from three different directions.

The beholder Magister was eventually slain by the human mage Almer Galarthund in an elaborate trap. The beholder mage was enticed into a tunnel fitted with many wands that could fire at it from all sides and blasted to nothingness. The explosions of the expiring magical items fitted to its body were so great that they shattered the mountain that held the trap, destroying the wands that had claimed the life of Quaervaxthanus and maiming the beholder's slayer.

Almer Galarthund

(reigned 705–709 DR)

A human sorcerer of bitter tongue and cynical wits, Almer Galarthund came to office wracked with pain. The explosions he had caused in the slaying of his predecessor had just torn his body, and although he was not long in getting himself healed, he never forgot how much maiming himself had hurt. He took to adopting disguises, acquiring all the defensive magic he could,

and ruthlessly slaying any wizard who discovered who he was or approached him too closely.

A tall, lean man, Almer liked to watch dancing and listen to gentle, melancholy music. He soon desired not to be Magister any longer, and decided to train another wizard to be his successor—but, as had happened to other Magisters before him, his dreams were doomed to meet a sudden and premature end.

The Night of Fourteen Magisters

(4th Eleasias, The Year of the Earnest Oaths, 709 DR)
With the help of his three apprentices (two of whom died tendering their aid), the "insanely ambitious" archmage Zunroun Ilber of Calimport cloned himself a dozen times in a bid to become Magister.

Zunroun had observed that the incumbent, Almer Galarthund, was a man of habit, and although he changed his disguises often, he liked to stay at certain inns and take in the gossip. Scrying the Magister, Zunroun traced him as he approached one of his favorite stops, a roadside inn in northern Calimshan called The Vizier Vanquished, where Zunroun was waiting.

On the fourth night of Eleasias, 709 DR, Almer came to the inn, and Zunroun activated all his clones and worked a mighty magic on them to drive them to attack the Magister. Working this spell overwhelmed Zunroun's wits, and he collapsed.

His clones attacked Almer Galarthund. Beset on all sides, the Magister died under their spells. All nine surviving clones promptly became Magister—and went mad from the sudden power and enforced mental contact with their fellow "Zunrouns." Singlemindedly they attacked and slew each other.

When they were done, the inn was a riven ruin, only a handful of its staff surviving to flee into the night. One of them ran to alert the inn's hired "firestop mage," the local archwizard Belmer of the Six Thunders.

Belmer was wiping the sleep from his eyes when the original Zunroun, now Magister but still senseless, was slain by his last surviving apprentice, the young and cold-bloodedly calm Illinge Hardraw.

Illinge was still grandly declaiming to Zunroun's much-stabbed corpse that he had now taken the office as his own, and would do great things with it, when Belmer sent a spell from afar that slew him.

As the office of the Magister manifested around Belmer's brows, he gloated over his crystal ball—only to be butchered in mid-guffaw by his own apprentice, Turnock Draether, with an old battleax kept by Belmer as a trophy of his younger days. As Turnock drew himself up and felt the office of the Magister flowing into him, the events of this blood-drenched night had already caused Mystra to decide henceforth to confer powerful magical immunities upon newly risen Magisters.



Turnock Draether

(reigned 709–762 DR)

A herbalist by training, born to hill-dwelling herbalists who steamed near what is now Mosstone in Tethyr, Turnock was fascinated at an early age by the spellcasting of traveling hedge-wizards. When his parents perished in a severe winter, Turnock traveled to Zazesspur hoping to become an apprentice—but was rebuffed repeatedly by wizards. One grumbled of “boys under every bush with stars in their eyes and greed in their grasping fingertips, who tug at my cape at my every third stride in this city. ‘Tis growing to be a good argument for slavery!”

Undaunted, Turnock lurked and listened, and when he had identified a small and arguing group of outlander mages, he followed them to a tavern, waited in the cold and shadows outside until they came stumbling drunkenly out, and attached himself to the most intoxicated wizard, who needed help just walking.

So began his apprenticeship to Belmer of the Six Thunders (which were battle-spells that Turnock mastered on the sly during Belmer’s frequent drinking binges), a competent but cruel man whom Turnock soon grew to heartily hate. Belmer was fast rising in both wealth and influence, however, and needed a competent apprentice to carry out many of the business commissions he was undertaking, so he trained Turnock well. He also had an enspelled tattoo put over his apprentice’s heart, and made sure Turnock understood that treachery would mean an agonized death.

On the Night of Fourteen Magisters, Turnock gambled that splitting his master’s skull and body down to mid-sternum with one blow would leave Belmer unable to activate the tattoo before he died. He was correct, but had to craft magic very quickly after he became Magister, because the flesh bearing the tattoo and the tissue under it—including his heart—rotted at the same rate Belmer did.

He created the spells he needed to stay alive, but the experience shook Turnock to the core. He regarded it as both a warning and a demonstration of power from Mystra, and dedicated himself to being her diligent servant from that moment forth. His long career as Magister was spent training mages, visiting them to see how they were getting on, and aiding them with funds, new magic, advice, and sometimes his own skills-at-Art. Turnock had over sixty such “apprentices,” and he treated them well. A few schemed against him, but most came to love him deeply, and when he was slain, no less than forty of them rose in wrath to avenge him.

Cauldyn Darthus Salanger

(reigned for a month in 762 DR)

An ambitious Mulhorandi battle-mage who became very good at striking down wizardly foes, this young, handsome, agile man had glittering green eyes, shoulder-length blond hair, and a beard of the same hue. His vivid, life-sized portrait (which some folk swear moves its eyes to stare right at someone walking past) hangs in a tower gallery of High Hall in Elturel, where Cauldyn chose to dwell after winning the office of the Magister.

Cauldyn easily slew an aging and undoubtedly careless Turnock—but had barely announced his title to the awed city of Elturel, in a speech that promised the young city greatness and Realms-wide prominence if it made him part of its nobility, and gave him the coins he had need to work spells to the betterment of all, when the first of “Turnock’s Brood” arrived to avenge him.

For day after day they came, plunging out of the sky or trudging up through the city streets with fire smoldering in their eyes: mages of all descriptions and varying powers. Cauldyn fought them with his guile and vicious experience and the staves and rods and rings he had amassed, warning Elturians that these were evil mages whose deaths would aid all Faerûn and make heroes of their slayers. Some citizens listened, and struck down anyone who seemed to be a mage—but all too soon their Magister was blasted to staggering, smoking bones that struggled halfway down a street, howling in agony, before being torn apart by a furious mage who owed her power to Turnock. So passed Cauldyn, remembered as a Magister only because he handed out potions and scrolls freely to important Elturians upon his arrival, in order to win his own acceptance and permission to dwell in their fortress while yet a stranger known to wield dangerous magic.

Veldrin Daerlyn

(“Bluehands”)

(reigned 762–797 DR)

“Bluehands” was a cold-blooded, calculating mage who hunted down and destroyed wizards he thought might prove dangerous rivals. He won a nickname that most knew better than his real one through his habit of letting blue lightning arc around his wrists. Veldrin was awarded the office of the Magister after the death of Cauldyn because he was then undoubtedly the most dominant and effective wizard of Faerûn, even if his raw power did not match that of a score or more reclusive liches and archmages.

Fear of hidden sorcery being waged against him proved to be Veldrin’s doom: He went insane after he developed a spell that linked his mind with those of three reclusive but powerful mages, all of whom were



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unaware of his mental eavesdropping until his mind lapsed into wild collapse. Veldrin shared their thoughts as they crafted, practiced, and wrote down new spells—but proved unable to handle the mental load of three spells being modified in his mind simultaneously. He had hoped to gain spells and magical lore from the three as they worked, and to be able to see any challenges being readied against his own rule over magecraft.

Before his collapse into idiocy (which resulted in his death in the jaws of prowling wolves a night after its occurrence), Veldrin was infamous for his devastating, out-of-the-blue spell attacks on rivals and possible rivals. He spent much of his time spying on other mages, and then swooped in to seize what he wanted and goad them into attacking him—which of course gave him free rein to destroy them or imprison them forever in the helpless beast form of his choice. The subtle mental probe spell he used to slide undetected into the minds of the three mages was a departure from Veldrin's usual methods . . . and at least one sage believes the spell was planted among the treasures seized by Bluehands to lead him into disaster.

Veldrin had a high forehead, his hairline receding almost to the crown of his skull, but the brown hair on the sides and back of his head grew long and flowing, and he was both personally impressive and capable of mimicry of astonishing exactitude. He dwelt in Memnon, in a now-vanished tower. His treasure is thought to lie hidden in many places around that city, but has thus far eluded all searchers, so the belief may be no more than empty legend. He was mainly active in Amn, Tethyr, and the Vilhon.

Kurtal of Sreve

("Old Jawbone")

(reigned 797–886 DR)

The mightiest of the three reclusive mages spied upon by Veldrin "Bluehands," Kurtal was a maker of potions who had ample means to ensure his own longevity. The result was one of the longest Magisterial careers ever. He was reluctant to accept the office of the Magister when Azuth offered it, but soon took advantage of the powers it gave to him to vanquish foes, and was careful to study what had been recorded about earlier Magisters, and—without ever asking Mystra or Azuth directly for guidance—behave accordingly. So it was that many promising younglings, after being first apprenticed to a wizard but suffering some sort of setback (usually the death or disappearance of their mentor mage) were visited by a mysterious talking cloud that gave them *potions of healing*, a spellbook, an enchanted dagger or wand with but a few charges, a small coffer full of rare and hard-to-find spell components, and a selection of useful spell scrolls.

Kurtal used the guise of a cloud because of his own ugly appearance. "Tall and thin, he lacks a chin" was the cruel rhyme hurled at him in his childhood, because his lower jaw was so thin that his throat seemed to curve up to his front teeth, giving his face the appearance of a skull without its jawbone (the origin of the mocking nickname given him in later life). His hair heightened these looks: Much of his scalp was bald, and what hair he did have hung in shoulder-length, oily locks. This and his deep-sunken eyes made him look even more like a tomb-skull festooned with but a few remaining hairs. Most folk feared him or were disgusted by him on sight, and kept their distance—which was fine with Kurtal, since it meant fewer interruptions from his studies and a free hand to blast anyone who approached too closely without pausing to see who it might be.

Some mages have a need to pass on their learning, so as to feel it will not all be lost when they die, and Kurtal was one such. The gift packages he handed to mages made him feel good (since he had not managed to attract any apprentices), and they also contained something useful to him: The ends of the bindings of each spellbook were capped by tiny metal fittings he had personally crafted. They gave him known foci for various spying spells that he might cast from a distance, and for *teleport* spells, should he ever need to visit the surroundings of that spellbook. In other words, he could spy on the dozens of mages he had aided and whisk himself to any one of them should he feel the need. In one case, he used such a journey to snatch himself away from an ambush. In another, he went to where a wizard had just been slain by a dragon defending its lair and blasted the wounded wyrm, gaining its entire hoard and all of the useful gear on the bodies of the adventurers it had just slain.

Kurtal is known to have crafted an *unseen wagon* spell that floated where he desired (an amplification of *Tenser's floating disc* that could carry huge amounts of material, enclosing them in a box to prevent spillage and to conceal them, for the walls of the box were invisible, and yet rendered everything within them unseen too), but this spell was lost at his death.

Sreve was a small village of sheepherders and root-crop farmers that lay just to the north of the Cloud Peaks, somewhere along the present northern border of Amn. All trace of it has now vanished, and much of it became blasted and abandoned during Kurtal's lifetime, as he fought duel after duel against challengers for the office of the Magister.

None of the villagers ever dared to raise a hand against him, even when he lay torn and gasping in pain on the muddy main village street after a near-defeat. His servant gargoyles would swoop down at his bid-



ding to defend him and whisk him away to a high cavern somewhere in the mountains to be healed, and those same gargoyles tore limbs from visiting adventurers or anyone else who so much as muttered a word against the Magister of Sreve.

As a child Kurtal was considered a freak and an idiot, the last and weakest of three children born to the local miller (a woman of strong thews, will, and tongue who never took a husband, but dwelt with almost a dozen aunts, and worked a grist mill whose upper ponds were stocked with fish that she sold by the bucket, and defended with a crossbow fired with deadly accuracy from the mill roof), but he seemed able to read almost from birth. When he saw a traveling hedge-wizard cast a spell, Kurtal was entranced, and resolved to get some spells of his own to practice. His chance came a few years later, when the archmage Radellus decided to retire from the intrigues of Amn and came to a modest little tower he had taken a fancy to, perched on a wooded ridge east of the village. It was the home of an elderly local mage by the name of Justal Iroon, and Radellus simply marched in and attacked the old man with spells.

Their battle was fiercer than Radellus had anticipated, but Iroon was doomed. His smoking body was

hurled the length of Sreve's main street, as a grim warning to the village, and then whisked into the depths of the millpond, promptly killing all the fish.

Kurtal, who had been wandering on the ridge dreaming of being a mighty mage, as he often did, saw the battle as his only chance and actually plunged into the tower through a riven door during the furious exchange of spells. The lad managed to snatch two spellbooks before Radellus was finished frightening the villagers with his grisly triumph and spirited them away to a cellar of the mill, where he began years of painstaking study.

Years later, Kurtal took great delight in blasting an astonished Radellus to ashes. His spell also smashed through the front wall of the tower, and it began to topple—but Kurtal quickly cast a second spell that froze its falling stones forever in midair, as his own grim warning to the locals. He then set about building himself a far more defensible cavern-and-turret home, built into the ridge and girded about by many ward-spells. His staff and guards were gargoyles of his own making (he had more than a dozen), and from his new home Kurtal set about making himself into a mage to be reckoned with.



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In part, he did this by spying with magic on other mages and carefully choosing which ones to slay so as to gain their spells and other magical plunder. Kurtal always learned all he could about his targets, and planned accordingly—but followed his own peculiar moral code, openly challenging his chosen victims before striking at them. This may have been one factor in bringing him to the attention of Mystra and Azuth as possible Magisterial material, despite his cruelties and his habit of indulging in moments of wanton destruction.

Kurtal customarily beheaded the mages he vanquished in battle and took the heads home to serve him as advisers, preserving them magically and linking them to obey and answer him by means of a complicated network of spells that he was very proud of.

For years he queried the row of heads, never realizing that his web of spells had provided an outlet for a sorceress he had imprisoned years before, petrified into a very undignified statue and placed by his bath to serve as a towel-holder. By means of his own spells, Phiironaera of Yacla spoke through the preserved heads, solemnly guiding Kurtal astray into ever bolder actions in the area south of the Vilhon, until his behavior had several times brought him to the attention of Sharglar Dulrathran, another ambitious wizard who saw his best path of advancement to be the role of slayer-of-mages.

Sharglar wasted no time in becoming Kurtal's doom. He did his own spell-spying, waited until the Magister had begun yet another duel, and then *teleported* himself to the scene, standing as still as a statue through the explosions and carnage until the sorcerer of Sreve had once more triumphed—whereupon he calmly introduced himself, announced his challenge, and attacked.

Kurtal's spells were quickly exhausted, and he tried to escape by using one of his enchanted items to take him to a spellbook he had doled out years before—but Sharglar was ready for that, his tracer already cast to come along for the ride, and he smote Kurtal to ashes and then did the same to the sorcerer whose abode they had both precipitously arrived at, thereby unwittingly shattering a scheme to seize the rulership of Tethyr and build it into a realm reaching from the Chionthar in the north to the Calim Desert in the south, and as far east as its whelmed armies could conquer. (The rest of the cabal of wizards who had embraced this plot melted away back to their own individual affairs, without the wider world ever being any the wiser.)

So it was that Sharglar became Magister. The uninhabited home of Kurtal became the lair of its guardian gargoyles, who kept plunderers at bay for almost a century before a rockslide buried the abode with the cruel creatures—and, presumably, the bulk of Kurtal's magic, including the statue that is Phiironaera—inside.

Sharglar Dulrathran

(“The Lord of Beasts”)

(reigned 887 DR)

This ambitious mage dwelt in a castle he had seized from a family of doppelgangers (who had presumably taken it from human builders in earlier times). The doppelgangers referred to themselves as the Flaerin, and were called “the Beast-Lords” by the few humans to learn of them, because the dense woodlands that then stood around the already crumbling castle were alive with monsters of all sorts, brought thence by the doppelgangers (as both entertainment and a defense against woodcutters and would-be settlers) and fed by means of orc- and cattle-disgoring deepspawn monsters, caged in the castle depths.

Sharglar named himself the Lord of Beasts as a boast, and his home the Castle of Beasts, but he was fated to earn his nickname soon after becoming Magister, when some experimental spells went awry and left him trapped with beast-limbs, unable to cast spells strong enough to reverse his condition. He prowled his castle in frustration for months, until the arrival of High Lord Kalgrathur.

Kalgrathur Daycloaks

(reigned 887–889 DR)

A ruthless war-leader in the Vilhon Reach, Kalgrathur cofounded the Nightfire Lances mercenary force and enjoyed great success as a battle-wizard in the many private wars that raged just south of the Vilhon at that time. Eventually he rose to rule the now-vanished land of Maurmurra by the brutal means of magically forcing Uemer Vordrym, its king, to come down from his throne, crown Kalgrathur, and then cut his own throat. Kalgrathur used the same compulsion to force other courtiers to kneel to him, and pronounced himself High Lord of the realm. His rule was not popular.

Maurmurra lay between the Nagawater and the River Arran from about present-day Arranford to Nagarr (then called Yacla). As High Lord of Maurmurra, from 882 onward, Kalgrathur made war on neighboring holds, using the Lances as his private bodyguard as protection against his own Maurmurran troops. Winning a series of small but bloody victories, he enlarged his realm slowly but steadily, until the spring of 887, when his forces hacked their way through the Castle of Beasts (which stood east of present-day Kurrsh), a monster-infested fortress, to the throne room at its heart. There Kalgrathur found its ruler, the half-man, half-beast Sharglar Dulrathran, vainly trying to magically summon more beasts (Sharglar's beast limbs were far too ungainly to make the exacting gestures necessary for successful spellcasting). Kalgrathur slew



the Lord of Beasts, and was astonished to receive the office of the Magister thereby.

As Magister, Kalgrathur continued to attack baronies, ignoring Mystra's dictates and slaughtering every man, woman, and child who showed so much as an interest—let alone aptitude—for magic. When her patience ran out, the goddess smote Kalgrathur with bouts of forgetfulness, and then he began to sink into hour-long states of *feeble-mindedness* whenever he tried to cast a spell. Though Kalgrathur remained otherwise hale and hearty, it did not take long for another ambitious mage, Jonsryn Daerathal, to set him afire in battle.

Kalgrathur was a vigorous, burly man with handsome features marred only slightly by a craggy broken nose. His shaggy hair and beard gave him the appearance of an angry wolf, and he had a temper and roaring voice to match. When not training and outfitting the reluctant folk of Maurmurra to be his army in another war, or waging such a war, Kalgrathur's hobbies included card games, hunting various groundfowl for the stewpot with javelins and throwing knives, and collecting lore about his family.

The Daycloaks had once been an important family in Halruua, but had sunk into obscurity, penury, and near-extinction scattered across Faerûn after being outcast from that land for a hushed-up (but obviously severe) magical transgression. Admittedly working only from hints, Kalgrathur believed it might have had something to do with opening *gates* to let uncontrolled hordes of fell, otherplanar creatures into Faerûn, inside the abode of a rival family.

Jonsryn Daerathal

(reigned 889–902 DR)

A cold-blooded slayer of mages, Jonsryn spent his time in office alternately indulging himself in debauchery (using his magic to command the attentions of all rulers and beautiful ladies he met) and hunting down all possible sorcerous rivals. In this, his deeds were no different from those before he had won the office of the Magister. He was handsome (even when not resorting to his usual *shapechange* spells) and a tireless traveler, preferring to move often and be a part of many lands and societies rather than settling in any one place.

An accomplished actor, Jonsryn was fully capable of convincing others that he was of this or that nationality, age, profession, social standing, or gender. He used his skills—and low cunning—to slaughter all the mages he met (though seldom in swift, straightforward attacks), murdering even senior court mages and youths beginning fumbling apprenticeships.

By doing so even after becoming Magister, he swiftly lost Mystra's favor, and she began to send Jonsryn nightmares of his own bleak fate, often showing him

tortured by a sorcerous fiend who cooked him alive on a spit, dined on his hands and feet, and then magically restored them for use in later meals. The fiend's face would change continuously, moving through the visages of Jonsryn's victims—and although he often woke screaming, he did not cease to prowl and slay mages.

Fair duels were not Jonsryn's style. He preferred to poison, or to attack the sleeping or drunken (often by crushing them under falling stone blocks he had translocated to just above them), or to engage in a whirlwind surprise attack.

He cached and hid all magic he gained, except for a growing array of healing potions carried at his belt, and some sort of blasting wand or scepter (Jonsryn always discarded whatever he was carrying when something better came into his hands).

A man of forgotten origins (one sage claims he came from Nimbral, another that he was a Mulhorandi of high birth, enslaved and brought to Calimshan to serve a mage before escaping to wreak havoc on all wizards), Jonsryn never slowed in his murderous career—until he attacked the wrong sorceress, and was slain in spell-battle by the Flame of the North. Before she vaporized his body, Taline was shaken to see that in death, Jonsryn was faintly smiling.

Taline Telgara

("The Flame of the North")

(reigned 902–946 DR)

Named for her amber-haired, black-browed beauty and her agility (in youth she was a dancer and acrobatic tumbler, and she never lost her love of leaping about, even during spell-battles), Taline Telgara is considered one of the greatest of Magisters. Her passions and the many magics she created are still remembered by bards as well as sages. One minstrel said of her that "Taline loved all Faerûn—often, and enthusiastically."

The Flame of the North was born in a nameless, now-vanished foresters' hamlet near present-day Everlund, spent a happy childhood playing in the forest glades, was orphaned in winter orc raids as a youth, and then was taken in by the Sarvaradas, a family of traveling merchants who sold jewelry, buttons, fine chains and fastenings, and gloves, and entertained folk with juggling, dancing, acrobatics, and broad comedy routines at each stopover.

Taline's beauty and agility made her a hit by her second season—and kept old Mroarild Sarvarada puffing along with his dagger always half-drawn, trying to keep his "Leaping Flame" from being abducted by ardent males in audiences wherever they performed. Taline looked older than she was, and soon learned to act older than she was, becoming a flirt who was only kept from becoming more by the vigilance of the Sar-



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varadas, who insisted the family perform together, never as individuals.

Bards wrote tunes for Taline to dance to, nobles invited her to their revels, and more than one ruler invited her (less than subtly) to visit his castles and stay for as long as she desired to.

Nanath Sarvarada, Taline's "mother," was a hedge-wizard who knew a handful of spells, and Taline found herself drawn to spy on Nanath's very private moments of casting, fascinated by the magic. One night Nanath caught her watching, and they whispered together excitedly for most of the rest of the night. Thereafter, Nanath taught Taline the little magic she knew and was astonished at how quickly the child she had raised grasped matters of the Art. Taline quickly surpassed Nanath and began looking for more magic.

Throughout her life, Taline was always "moving and doing," sleeping only for short periods and rarely staying still. Once she began hunting magic, she took to creeping around city rooftops—and peering in windows—whenever the Sarvaradas were in a place large enough for wizards to dwell in something other than fortified keeps.

She learned a lot of things, including a little about magic, and there finally came a time when she saw a wizard who was studying spells knifed in the back by a thief. The wizard clawed at his killer as he died, the thief stumbled, off balance from the attack as he grabbed at the spellbook—and Taline swung herself down and in through the window. Her kick had the full weight of her swinging body behind it and hit home right in the thief's throat. He hit the floor hard and did not get up—and in another moment, Taline was back out the window with the spellbook in her hands.

So began her rise to skill in Art. Taline took to trading spells with mages she judged honorable, and her judgment was good enough to keep her alive as she steadily grew in power and experience. When the Sarvaradas retired from the road to reset and recut gems for a coster based in Athkatla, Taline began to use her birth surname to protect her foster parents from foes seeking to control her by kidnapping or menacing them. She began to attend MageFairs, where her friendliness, good looks, and acrobatics attracted much attention—and she made full use of her growing reputation to learn all the magic she could.

Two of the mages smitten by her were fellow members of a promising adventuring band, The Swords Aflame, and (largely by making it clear she was also smitten by them, and by their sword-brothers in the band), Taline managed to join the band as a full member. With the Swords, her daring and her acrobatics served her well, and the adventures she took part in won her a lot of new magic—or rather, old magic unearthed again, for the Swords were busily breaching

old tombs, destroying undead, and seizing the treasure therein. At one point, Taline and her two fellow wizards had no less than forty spellbooks to study before their next foray.

It was Taline who hit upon the idea of hiding their treasure in hollow minarets in houses the band was buying in various port cities. Do a little rebuilding, tell masons to make the minarets hollow and detachable, to serve as snow-hoods for chimneys, block up the chimneys after the builders leave, and create crawling claws and dread (detailed in the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® Annual 1*) to guard the treasure chests, just inside the hollow minarets.

By the time a few disastrous expeditions and growing rivalries in the ranks split the Swords Aflame apart, Taline was skilled enough to *teleport* herself and a growing store of spellbooks from minaret to minaret, down the Sword Coast, until she had all the treasure she wanted. Then she set a trap for the lone surviving mage of her two former adventuring companions, and waited. When he appeared, she struck, and slew him in a long and bitter spell-battle. Badly wounded, she resolved never to win so narrow a victory again, and she set about gathering all manner of wearable enchanted items, and building up her skills as a sorceress.

Solo once more, Taline became a frequent visitor to MageFairs and mage-guilds all over Faerûn. Always beautiful and affectionate, she broke hearts wherever she went, and had the knack of making men her life-long friends. After a decade or so of this, the words of the sage Nlaergus can be said to very close to the truth: "All wizards of the day were awed by her, and many loved her."

It was at this time when the Magister Jonsrynn foolishly attacked her, and Taline gained the office of the Magister. Her new powers seemed to make Taline both bolder and suddenly desperate—as if she realized that, like her predecessor, her time was now running out and she would one day all too soon be slain in her turn. She gave her passionate, willful nature full rein, seducing princes and paladins alike, her beauty positively glowing, and her warmth and kindness winning her admirers wherever she went. Wizards fell over each other to offer her new spells as gifts, knowing they would gain some time spent with her in return, and perhaps become good friends with the Flame of the North.

For her part, Taline gave away magic freely, to young children as well as to suitors and the ambitious, ardent young wizards who sought to impress her. She took to using *fly* spells to drift along above the countryside, observing and righting wrongs wherever she saw them. More than once she tasted orc arrows, and even crossbow quarrels sent up at her by unfriendly humans, but



she took such wounds almost with pride, not hesitating to stagger to the steps of an unfamiliar court or mage's tower and ask for aid rather than whisking herself to where magical healing was already waiting.

Some wizards feared for her, thinking one of several cabals of evil mages who were rising in power at this time would seize on her when she was wounded, or flying alone, and slay her to gain her powers. Astonishingly, none did—perhaps by the grace of watchful Mystra and Azuth, or perhaps through sheer good fortune. Some wizards even took to calling Taline “the Queen of Spells” at MageFairs and revels, but this she firmly corrected, saying only the goddess Mystra deserved such a title.

There came a time at last when Taline began to feel the aches of age and took to tumblings and pirouettings less often. Her lone rambles grew fewer, and she spent more time writing down variant spells and seeing to unfinished business. And that was when—at last—it appeared that she had been smitten.

His name was Caldauvur Maerglaauthyn, and he came out of the wilderness, he said, to see the legendary Flame of the North at her promised visit to the fledgling settlement of Waterdeep. (It is thought that Mystra dream-guided Taline thence, to advise and inspire Ahghairon, and it seems she did seek out that later famous mage.)

Caldauvur and Taline were seen to take dragon shape and soar together up into the northern skies one evening, and their courtship was as whirlwind as its advent suggests. They were wed that fall. This was Taline’s last act, as it turned out. She died in her bridal bed when an involuntary awakening of her warding spells forced her newfound husband, the weredragon Caldauvur, into his dragon shape—and in that shape he tore her apart.

Caldauvur Maerglaauthyn

(reigned 946–949 DR)

Born a weredragon, of unknown parentage and birthplace, Caldauvur grew up strong, handsome, and with an astonishing aptitude for magic. He is known to have seized a dying dragon’s hoard (perhaps with the old wyrm’s blessing) early in life, and to have used it to finance his attendance at a school of wizardry somewhere in the wilderness south of Westgate. His chosen home thereafter was in the Sword Coast North, which may have been where he was born. History records little about Caldauvur until his tragic marriage to the Magister Taline, but is quite specific about his public grief. Overcome with remorse, the weredragon offered his life to Mystra if it would bring Taline back, pleading with the goddess to intercede in her passing.

Azuth appeared to the new Magister and gently

refused his entreaties, bidding Caldauvur be as good a Magister as she was.

A shattered Caldauvur lost himself in weeping and fled into the high peaks of the North—where he was shortly beset by furious mages who blamed him for the “murder” of Taline Telgara. The weredragon refused to defend himself, but it seems Azuth, or shadowstaves sent by Mystra, shielded the grieving Magister all that winter, through many attacks by mages and a few launched by dragons (for the Magister spent much time in his dragon form).

In spring, Caldauvur came back to the cities of men, cold and grim with a new determination—and set about formally (and harshly) training novices into wizards as no Magister has done before or since. Everyone was welcome in his classes, but discipline was ironclad, enforced by spells, and the teaching of consequences and ethics accompanied each revelation of new magic. Mages and rulers alike at first hated and feared “the Schooled,” but then grew to respect what Caldauvur was doing—building a body of mages with strong and common principles and consciences for the first time.

Unfortunately for the weredragon Magister, certain established and evil mages did not respect his achievements, and began to scheme together as to how to overwhelm and slay Caldauvur. They managed his death in the spring of 949 DR, when they lured him into a death trap by taking the places and outward shapes of a community of Schooled who dwelt in a walled manor in the lower Dessarin valley, and attacked en masse. In the resulting battle, Caldauvur, the manor, and all but two of the conspirators were destroyed—and one of the survivors was left screaming, staring, and witless. He died months later, never managing to work another spell or speak coherently. The other became Magister.

Ildathchance Orlaer

(reigned 949–952 DR)

A saturnine, sophisticated Calishite satrap known for magically altering his slaves to better carry out their tasks, Ildathchance had not expected to become Magister (he was not the greatest of the mages who conspired against Caldauvur), and had in fact planned only ways of eluding a new Magister who decided to slaughter all of his coconspirators, by creating a clone of himself to run his Calishite holdings.

When the office of the Magister came upon him, he hastened home to slay the clone (which he accomplished easily, since he was still shielded against all magic and could rush right up to his clone with daggers in his sleeves). Murdering himself was an experience that shook him to the core, and he fled his estates weeping, feeling lost and lonely for the first time in decades.

Not knowing what to do, he wandered Faerûn,



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seeing its wilderlands for the first time, and praying often to Mystra for guidance. There was no response, until an evening when he found a lost, injured child in Shadowdale and used his spells to restore the lad to health and home.

Immediately upon his turning away from the hut where the boy dwelt, Ildathchance saw a beckoning radiance in the woods—a sparkling star of silver and blue flaring flames that it seemed only he could see.

He followed it to a knoll deep in the forest, and there found himself facing Mystra herself. They spoke together, frankly, of what a Magister could be and should be, and Ildathchance fell on his knees and swore to the Mother of All Magic that he would serve her diligently henceforth, spreading magic and aiding all of its practitioners, even if it hastened his own doom.

His time in office was not fated to be long, but Ildathchance did manage to gift some twenty new mages with spells and items, and he visited some of the Schooled to further their mastery of magic, ere he perished. The forest knoll in Shadowdale has been sacred to Mystra ever since. The power of her manifestation left it a place always in her regard, so that those who go there know they will be seen and heard by the goddess. Many clergy of Mystra, early in their devotions, journey thence to sleep a night upon on the knoll, awaiting the dream-visions she sends as to what tasks they should undertake for her. Dammasae, the mother of the spell-fire-wielder Shandril, is buried on the knoll. Thrice men seeking magical treasure have dared to dig for her unmarked grave—and thrice bolts of lightning have stabbed down from clear skies to leave no more than drifting ashes.

Ildathchance died when an ambitious Red Wizard of Thay, seeking to rise in rank in that young, vigorous realm of mages, found a refuge the Magister had established in a disused dwarven mine, in a "hollow fang of rock" somewhere in the North. The Thayan devised a spell that made shields emit a *magic missile* upon mental command, created over eighty such shields, and crafted a mighty linking spell, using string soaked in his own blood, to make them all respond to his bidding as if he was wearing them. Then he lined the vertical entry shaft to the refuge with them, concealed them with another spell, and waited. Ildathchance always used a *fly* spell to swoop down the shaft, thrusting a *wizard eye* ahead to seek out intruding monsters—but by the Thayan's sheer luck, *magic missile* was a spell the Magister (who had always owned a *brooch of shielding*) was not rendered immune to. Ildathchance's aged *brooch* was overwhelmed, and his slayer dropped a boulder down the shaft on top of the dying Magister, smashing him before he could work any sort of escape or healing magic.



Baerzlus Anagathilir

(reigned 952 DR)

Gaining the office of the Magister certainly got this young Red Wizard noticed in Thay—but it earned him defiant hostility, not the respect he expected. No one deferred to him or accorded him greater rank when he declared his title or invoked Mystra. They merely sneered and attacked. Baerzlus fled the realm after one mage set his slaves on the new Magister, clawing and biting like dogs, and did not return to Thay until most of the temporary immunities conferred by Mystra had faded.

By then, Baerzlus knew what reception to expect (he had spent days scrying Thay from afar, watching the deeds and preparations of the wizards who knew him best), and he launched surprise attacks on mage after mage, concentrating on his personal foes and superiors and always seeking to slay as swiftly and as safely as possible.

Baerzlus disposed of almost twenty Red Wizards in this way before Thay in general awoke to the fact of his return—and it was then only a matter of hours before the Magister was overwhelmed by Thayan mages attacking from all sides without regard for the safety of anyone or of the land around. All of these Red Wizards fully expected the office of the Magister to be personally conferred upon them when the fray was done, and not a few launched side attacks on other Thayan mages nearby in the battle to ensure their eventual ascendance.

There were almost as many deadly side skirmishes in this orgy of spellhurling than spells sent by the Thayans against their common foe—but the Magister in their midst struggled in a prison of wild, roiling magic. Soon the hurled magic overwhelmed the powers of all the enchanted items he had seized from his earlier victims, and Baerzlus was vaporized in an instant, but not before rifts had been torn in the Weave and in the very air of Faerûn, leaking the matter of other planes into that valley in Thay (Rannath, a dry southwestern to northeastern vale that cleaves the Surague Escarpment northwest of Pyarados, which is today still a place of occasional wild magic and the appearance of bodaks, bebeliths, and other Abyssal creatures). Azuth repaired the damage, absorbing the spells that the Red Wizards dared to hurl at him without responding, but the cowardice and imprecision of their mass attack, their carelessness for the consequences to Faerûn, and their clawing, greedy grasping after Art frankly disgusted both Mystra and Azuth—so the two deities conferred the office of the Magister on someone else.

Bilnur Faerglammer

(reigned 952–977 DR)

This fat, mumbling, bespectacled mage made an unlikely Magister, shuffling and whistling tunelessly from room to room of the grand, dusty old manor house in Tethyr, built by an extinct family, that now served him as home and workshop. Its closets and antechambers were crammed with animated guardians (flying suits of armor that were possibly helmed horrors, but probably something more powerful) and heaps of coins. Ignored furniture was collapsing into ruin everywhere, and birds flew unmolested through the echoing rooms—but no thieves or visitors dared to venture near the overgrown grounds of Faerglammer House. Before accepting the office of the Magister, Bilnur had spent the better part of seventy years in his house, crafting hundreds of pairs of the enchanted gauntlets that bear his name (described in the chapter titled “Magisterial Magic”). Sales of these made him rich and (in certain circles) famous, but he had no use for society, sightseeing, or adventuring, and thus remained little more than a name even to sages of sorcery.

Upon becoming Magister, Bilnur is known to have begun tucking spell scrolls into completed gauntlets that were being shipped out to the gatehouse for sale (by a coster whose agents picked up his creations and left the monies owed to him without ever seeing the reclusive mage). In his early years, he defeated several foes—and at least one attack on his house—with a spell of his creation whose secrets are thought to have died with him. It was dubbed the “flytrap” spell because it created large airborne spectral jaws that engulfed foes, but many mages who desire to wield it have searched the ruins of Faerglammer House (which now stands open to the sky, a vine-choked field of rubble, broken pillars, and leaning stubs of wall) without finding anything. The armored guardians seem to have melted away into air within hours of the old mage’s death, and the coins were taken long ago. Slim hopes remain that Bilnur had a cache of magic somewhere else that is yet to be found, or that one of the scrolls he sent away in a gauntlet held the coveted spell. Searchers are warned that strange shapechanging and often invisible foes seem to know that mages come to the ruins, and on rare occasions hunt such visitors.

Bilnur died of natural causes after six score years of life without benefit (it is thought) of magical *longevity* assistance, one of the rare Magisters never to have faced a serious challenge for his office.



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Malune Nalonkrivar

(reigned 977–983)

Azuth awarded the office of the Magister to this Calishite courtier upon the eve of his intended assassination. The smooth-tongued, handsome master of intrigues had been Calimshan's ambassador to Thay, Mulhorand, Tethyr, and Tharsult, but had angered certain powerful satraps of the realm with his refusal to threaten and bluster on Calimshan's behalf.

The god's avatar and the wizard were actually conferring when the killers burst in, firing a hail of poisoned darts at Malune from two directions. Azuth lofted them both up through a momentarily gaseous ceiling into the starry night above the Palace of the Murabirs in Calimport, to continue their conversation.

Malune, however, considered his life to be forfeit from that moment on. If a god had not dropped in to talk, he would have been dead, no matter what spells he might have managed to loose before falling. Wherefore the diplomat accepted the office, abandoned his former life, and dedicated himself to being Magister henceforth.

Malune was a tall, broad-shouldered, bearded man with sharp, handsome features, eyes of icy blue, glossy black hair, and a commanding presence. He made heads turn and ladies' eyes linger wherever he went—and as Magister, he collected his valuables, hid all but his spellbooks and his *ring of flying* in a ruined castle, and flew off across Faerûn to teach and dispense magic. Many of the mages he aided were comely females, but Malune Nalonkrivar considered that merely a sign of Mystra's approval, for putting such delights in his way at almost his every randomly chosen landing.

Charming and yet distant, keeping his true thoughts and feelings well masked, Malune traveled Faerûn for his entire tenure in office, almost seeming determined to see all of its sights and taste all of its delicacies and vintages. He fought occasional duels (which he appeared to win with casual ease) and used his smooth mastery of negotiations to swing business deals enough to leave him lacking no luxuries. As a result, he cached wealth all across the heartlands of Faerûn—but never returned to reclaim his coins, gems, and trade-bars, because a chance stop to rest in Tunland (in a year whose severe winter snows had swollen its swamps tenfold) ended his career precipitously—in the jaws of a black dragon.

Constulgrael

("The Water King")

(reigned 983–986 DR)

The only true dragon to be Magister, Constulgrael was a great black wyrm on a hunt (to slay all male black dragons he met, slay wyrms of other types if their

deaths could be managed without undue peril, and to find a black dragon female to take as a mate) when he encountered a weary Malune Nalonkrivar. The dragon was actually dozing under the surface of the swamp waters, with only his back showing, when the Magister landed on it and decided to make camp. Casting a spell of warmth, Malune strolled down to the edge of the water to dip himself something to drink (once he had cast the proper spells to purify it, of course)—and the aroused dragon rolled over, drowning the Magister and biting off his head before he could do anything. A *contingency* erupted from the headless, spasming body in the dragon's jaws, but Constulgrael survived the results—a *teleport* of the wizard's remains, both inside the dragon and out—to a hilltop cairn where Malune kept many healing magics.

The dragon tore apart the cairn, pawing through the magic there, as the powers of the office of the Magister manifested in him. Bewildered, he called on Mystra for explanations—and Azuth came, and spoke with him, and bargains were made. On the spot, the god transformed all the spells in Malune's spellbook and cairn into verbal-only draconic forms usable by Constulgrael, showed him how to freely study, memorize, and purge spells as humans do—and received the dragon's solemn promise to distribute magic as energetically as possible in the years ahead.

Constulgrael kept his promise, and even grew to enjoy the night flights (he rested in hiding by day), the sendings of whispered magical beckonings to mages, and the way that mages struggled to master their fear when meeting with him. The Water King's great battle-scarred snout became a familiar sight in those swamps that adjoined cities where wizards dwelt—and the destruction he wrought in certain cities of Thay when his visits were met with spell attacks is still remembered in Thayan lore. A few Red Wizards sought revenge by hunting the dragon Magister in the years that followed, and their attacks had severely weakened the Water King just before he met his doom in the Howling Caverns.

Meldryn Jalensifer

(reigned 986–998 DR)

This stealthy, soft-spoken mage was a master of disguises and not being noticed (perhaps even being a psionic wild talent in that respect) who for many years carefully advanced his own powers while remaining as hidden from the notice of other wizards as possible. He came upon a riven Cult of the Dragon hold north and west of the Vilhon area after some unknown battle or internal feud and gained copies of the spells and processes necessary to create undead zombie and skeleton dragons (detailed in the *Cult of the Dragon* sourcebook). This gave him an idea for slaying the new



draconic Magister, whose ascension to office had so shocked mages across Faerûn.

The Howling Caverns were a labyrinth of large tunnels—perhaps old dragon lairs, created by digging to join various meltwater caverns into one large, spider-like array—on the northern flanks of the Orsraun Mountains. Winds constantly moaned through them, hence their name, and nothing dwelt therein because of the constant scouring of the frigid winds. (Today, the Howling Caverns are gone, filled, or swept away in rock collapses caused when the peaks above the cave network cracked and fell into the cavities lacing their flanks.) They were, however, quite large enough for even the largest dragons to crawl through, and some wyrms used them as a resting place on long flights.

Meldrynn created no less than ten zombie and skeleton dragons, placing each carefully in the caverns behind walls of loose rubble, to conceal them from any creature entering the cave network.

Then he set to work on a lure to draw Constulgrael to the Howling Caverns, shadowing the Magister carefully so that the rumor of “dragons’ spellbooks, in the tomb of a huge dragon laid out in a stone coffin and all, with strange runes all over it!” would reach the Water King’s ears before it spread to the Cult of the Dragon or other dragons of Faerûn.

The ruse worked, and when Constulgrael entered the caverns, Meldrynn set his undead creations to attacking from all sides, trapping the Magister in the caves. Then the human issued his challenge, even as he hurled spells at Constulgrael, who backed into a side cavern to better defend himself—only to perish in pain as Meldrynn’s *monster summoning* spells whisked beast after hungry beast in to savage the dragon’s backside. Once they began to devour the Water King alive, the pain forced the wyrm to turn and fight them—leaving the human challenger free to hurl all the slaying spells he had ready, and even to read scrolls and trigger wands at leisure.

So the office of the Magister passed to Meldrynn, who immediately began crafting automatons to speak for him so that he could hide once more. The mysteries and misdirections he managed to weave around the office served him well (challenges were issued to phantoms, and mages desiring to slay Meldrynn hunted for him in vain), but the dragonslayer-mage had been reduced to a skulker in shadows, doing nothing but lurking and surviving.

Meldrynn’s passion for subterfuge and concealment continued unabated, even when Mystra pointedly gave him the *Scepter of Mystra* (described fully in the sourcebook *Prayers From the Faithful*) on Midsummer in 994 DR, with orders to pass it on to a minor mage. He did so, and then retreated once more into the shadows—

only to receive a series of dream visions hinting at the Magisterial duties of teaching and promoting the spread of magic.

Meldrynn’s response was to spend almost a year crafting scrolls of one of his most useful spells, *Jalensifer’s trident* (detailed in the “Magisterial Magic” chapter of this sourcebook)—and then go on a whirlwind tour across Faerûn, thrusting scrolls into the hands of startled wizards. So it came to be widely distributed throughout the Realms before his death, and it remains a popular spell among both Magisters and adventuring mages to this day.

Meldrynn met his end when an ambitious wizard from what are today called the Border Kingdoms discovered the Magister’s hidden lair in the Star Mounts and waited there among Meldrynn’s spellbooks, knowing the Magister would return to regard himself in magic.

The Magister was exhausted in both body and spells when he came back to his lair. When challenged, he astonished the intruder by surrendering in visible relief. He offered to freely submit his life and office to the spells of his challenger, so long as they could have a few days of leisure together while Meldrynn explained all of his deeds, spells, traps, and secrets—and enjoy some good meals and relaxed converse, after years of running and hiding.

The challenger was naturally suspicious, but the Magister swore by Azuth and Mystra that he intended no trickery, and had neither sleeping guardians nor ready traps at hand that could do his nascent successor ill. And it came to pass as Meldrynn promised. He submitted peacefully to death by *meteor swarm* (the challenger used three such spells in succession, just to be sure), and the office of the Magister passed to Sarndaen Dalabar of Athkatla.

Sarndaen Dalabar

(“The Opener”)
(reigned 998–1066 DR)

One of the most magically mighty archmages ever to challenge for the office of the Magister, Sarndaen Dalabar was a masterful actor who had played the part of a shy, unambitious, eager-to-please bumbler for years, serving three wizardly masters in Athkatla, moving from one to the next as his masters overreached themselves and were slain in the many-layered mercantile intrigues of the southerly Sword Coast. (There is no hint of treachery on the part of Sarndaen in any of these deaths . . . but then, even if it occurred, there would not be.)

Sarndaen never stopped being an actor—and a master manipulator. From his first days in office, he learned all he could about the other mages active in Faerûn and worked to set the most powerful wizards at



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loggerheads, so in their battles they would have no time or thought to spare for one never-to-be-seen Magister. Then Sarndaen found some mages of middling accomplishments and growing restlessness and gave them plentiful magic in return for their promises to go forth and teach a few spells to novices, handing out some scrolls and advice along the way. Thus insulated from all but the most determined hunter by his screen of agents engaged in busily fulfilling his Magisterial duties for him, Sarndaen turned to his first love (some sages term it his obsession): exploring and mapping the many gates that exist on Faerûn, and linking the face of Faerûn with other planes, other places . . . perhaps other worlds.

He stopped using his name, referring to himself only as "the Opener." Aside from periodic rests to consolidate what he had learned, check on doings among Faerûnian mages, and feed his agents more magic to dispense, Sarndaen devoted himself entirely to learning all he could about the *gates* left behind in the Realms by many hands.

The Opener's Map

The Opener filled books with written notes about the *gates*, noting their traps, peculiarities, specifics of their operation, and all their controls that he could discover. He also created an ever-growing map of the *gates*. First, he engraved a giant map of Toril on the stone tiles of a great feast hall, in a castle in the Ice Mountains abandoned by titans long ago that he had found and warded heavily with spells. Then he painstakingly enspelled the map, adding every *gate* he found.

The quiescent map appeared merely as a stone floor (the Opener kept much of it covered by beastskin rugs and furniture most of the time) unless one looked at the tiles closely—whereupon the unlabeled outlines of coasts and rivers and mountain ranges could be seen graven into the stone. Only when a tile was touched did the magic awaken: All known *gates* on that tile appeared as tiny red twinkling motes of light, each radiance marking the precise location of a *gate* terminus.

If a living creature touched one of those points of light, an arc of red radiance would leap from it to the other end(s) of the *gate*, if such were known, showing the links crossing Toril. If a living being moved any part of its body along one of these *gate-to-gate* arcs, visions were imparted to it of what one would see when arriving at the *gate* terminus in the direction of its movement, stepping out of the *gate*—and then walking around it, looking at it from all sides, with its surroundings in the background of one's mental view. By running a hand along an arc in both directions, both ends could be seen, as if one were actually stepping out of the *gates* in the real Faerûn.

Although the map remained incomplete when the

Opener died, Mystra judged that such an extensive overview of Faerûn's *gates* would concentrate too much power in the hands of its possessor and stifle magical striving. Accordingly, she and Azuth broke up the map, hiding its overall view from later mortals, but did not destroy it. Instead, they scattered the floor tiles around the Realms, placing some in the Herald's Holdfast, a handful in various rooms in Candlekeep, and others in tombs, the walls of Mystran temples, and sacred places (around altars to Mystra, for example) all over Faerûn.

The arcing links enspelled by the Opener have persisted even with the stones scattered. If an examiner today touches a stone that bears both ends of an arc, the entire *gate-link* can be seen. If the stone bears only one terminus, it arcs into nothingness, in the proper direction to point straight at the missing terminus (were the map to be assembled on a floor again); and by moving a hand or other living body apart along this incomplete arc, both ends of the *gate* can still be seen, but the examiner has to guess from the visions imparted just where the missing end of the *gate* is actually located. A few mortals alive today have managed to find two formerly adjacent stones of the Opener's map and traced a broken arc (both stones show them both ends of the arc, so if the visions match, they can be certain they have seen the entire route) . . . but no one, including the current and last few Magisters, has seen all of it. Several of the Chosen could make a map of their own, from their own separate investigations, that would cover a little more than half of the links mapped by the Opener.

Sarndaen Dalabar died in office when he stepped through a *gate* and was instantly crushed in an avalanche (just which *gate* is not known to any mortal alive today).

Immué Dathril

(reigned 1066–1104 DR)

This half-elven sorceress was born somewhere in eastern Tethyr, and although petite and possessed of striking good looks (she had glossy white hair, large pointed ears, milk-white skin, and large, liquid dark brown eyes), she managed to make a career for herself in a series of brawling adventuring bands until she had learned enough magic to strike out on her own. This led her to a career as a ship-mage (quelling weather and pirates, and repairing sails and leaks, aboard a vessel carrying cargo up and down the Sword Coast).

So it was that Immúé came to be awarded the office of the Magister by Azuth in the midst of fighting a storm on the deck of a merchant cog just off the Nelanther. She was not pleased and let the High One know it. Amused by her spirit, he created a tunnel of tranquility in the heart of the gale and whisked the ship along it to the intended destination of Mintarn.



There, Immué left the ship to begin her duties as Magister. She saw this as aiding the magically weak (young females in particular) against the magically strong—often marching into the towers of mighty mages and challenging them to duels, rather than the other way around. Those she defeated she stripped of magic, doling it out to minor mages elsewhere, but did not slay unless she had to in the heat of spell-battle . . . so she left a string of enemies in her wake. Immué had an impish sense of humor, which led her to do such things as to cast *imbue with spell ability* on all the dancers in a decadent Calishite nightclub for a night, giving them the power to cast *fly* spells by touch. She equipped unwilling courtiers elsewhere with long, glowing blue bobbing noses for a month (a spell so crafted as to inflict the same proboscises on anyone applying a *dispel magic* to an existing nose, while also protecting that existing nose against the quelling magic). On another occasion, she made revelers in Waterdeep speak all their thoughts aloud for an hour or so.

Immúé was expected by many to have a short career as Magister and a bloody comeuppance, but as time wore on, and the sorceress covered more and more of Faerûn in her teaching and magical-handout tours,

mages and Mystran clergy alike grew used to her, and almost fond of her.

Although she remained a “wild sword” (Lantanna might say “a loose bombard”) all her life, Immué mellowed, indulging in longer and longer periods of kindness in between her spasms of wild activity. During such times, she had affairs with some mages, taught others and helped them in many small but important ways (replacing crucial lost items or spells, for instance, or bringing them hitherto unobtainable or unaffordable spell components), and did many unheralded helping deeds for folk who had no magic at all (such as finding strayed animals, mending broken things, and quelling the effects of venoms and poisons). Though many of her enemies never forgave her, Immué also built a trail of friends in her later career.

Immúé vanished while on a foray into deep caverns reached via Undermountain, when she encountered creatures that may have been Phaerimm, or may have been something else—but in any case overwhelmed her, leaving little more than a head and upper torso in their wake. Enchantments laid on her kept the agonized half-elven Magister alive for days, her sanity slowly ebbing, until she was found by a mage who tried to give her a painless death by using



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a mind-linking spell. Immúé surrendered her life and powers to him gladly, and so a new Magister came to office—a drow.

Nelnaen Sauntarae

(reigned 1104–1126 DR)

The only drow Magister, thus far, was a renegade mage who wandered far through the Underdark from his home city of Sshamath, the City of Dark Weavings (thought to lie somewhere under the Far Hills). He broke with the views and edicts of that city's ruling wizards, shedding the cloak of Master of Alteration among them to leave Sshamath and wander the Underdark spreading magic.

That is, he taught to any drow willing to hear him of the mastery of spells, and not magic that draws only on the faerzress (Underdark radiations).

Nelnaen saw the faerzress as an evil weakness that stunted drow society. Its power was seized and jealously guarded by the rulers of cities clustered around radiation-rich caverns (in other words, the clergy of Lolth). This meant the inevitable continuation of a stagnant, cruel caste society in which drow might go to war to have some purpose in life, but could never grow and develop as a people, or escape the tyranny of the Spider-Queen and the limitations of the crowded Underdark.

Nelnaen is known to have explored huge areas of the Underdark, especially its uppermost reaches, close to the surface world. He developed close friendships with various priestesses of Ellistraee and some humans who dwelt under Waterdeep, and was known as kind but firm, and swift to be suspicious, with battle-spells always ready to hand. To most human mages of Faerûn his tenure is a time when, as far as they could tell, "there was no Magister." His fate is unknown. Azuth simply appeared one day to a human mage of the surface world and offered him the office of the Magister.

Olohmer Starnardyn

("Old Thunder")

(reigned 1126–1153 DR)

This mage of Arrabar was a careful, deliberate man who had the classic looks of a mage of power: tall stature, thin build, commanding nose, piercing eyes, flowing white beard and brows, and a sonorous voice (the oratorical use of which earned him his nickname). Olohmer disliked violence and dispute, regarded brigands and graspingly ambitious folk with contempt, and loved to plan subtle manipulations of rulers and costers and trendsetters for years ahead. He had already amassed a staggering fortune by making clothes and entering fields of business that he then steered societies into embracing (in the Chessentan region in particular, but also the cities about the Lake of Steam and the Tashalar).

At first, Old Thunder seemed to regard the office of the Magister as a sort of reward or honor that would mark him as first among mages at the next MageFair. Then (at about the time the first challengers began to appear) he saw it as an annoyance (he once even called the office "Mystra's honeyed trap"), and finally he came to see it as a door into a new and special land of achievement forever barred to "mere mortal mages."

Olohmer never consulted with Azuth or Mystra as to just what a Magister should do, but ultimately settled upon his own role and came to regard performance of it as his duty. He selected three homesteading families who dwelt in the mountainous backlands west of the Lake of Snows and began a covert breeding program, using subtle magic to steer individuals into marriages. Old Thunder was playing matchmaker among certain members of the Korchul, Halymmitor, and Sorntin whom he knew to have psionic wild talents, to see if their offspring would have stronger, more reliable psionic powers. He also knew that ancestors of all three families had been wizards.

For years the Magister influenced and spied upon these unknown rural clans, crafting false "ancient caches" and tombs for them to find spellbooks and scrolls of his making in. In the end, he convinced himself (if not every sage who has examined the records Olohmer carefully delivered to Candlekeep) that, for these three human families at least, aptitude for magic—the ability to become a mage—seemed to be something that could be inherited.

Old Thunder perished when he found three magical staves in a partially flooded cavern somewhere in the Orsraun Mountains. Thinking they might prove useful for his new breed of mages to use, he began to experiment with them, seeking to learn their abilities—and thereby triggered traps upon them that badly wounded him, seared away much of his memorized magic, and alerted the wizard who had placed them for Olohmer to find that now might just be an ideal time to appear and issue a challenge. So it was that the cruel and unscrupulous Horgyl Tusselvarr gained the office of the Magister—though he narrowly escaped being buried alive under a falling mountain peak, dislodged and hurled by Old Thunder in a last attempt to fell his foe.

Horgyl Tusselvarr

("Stonebeard")

(reigned 1153–1204 DR)

This burly, hook-nosed sorcerer had flinty eyes and a cold and forbidding mien (hence his nickname). He was the sort of wizard whom folk feared on sight, his eyes always full of menace—and patient promise. He gave magic only to the youngest, clumsiest novices, in private night visits wherein he always employed magical



silence to stifle the startled screams of those he jolted awake. To all other mages he was a foe who stole their best spells, smashed their golems and automatons, and set patrons and allies against them.

Horgyl was careful to tell Azuth that these depredations were not simply a Magister hewing down would-be challengers—they were the best way to make all mages endlessly scramble to develop new spells, and thus keep magic vigorous and leaping ever to new heights. He gave away some of the magic he seized to other mages, and kept other spells and processes to use in his own pet project: the crafting of enchanted power gauntlets that would enable nonmages to blast foes in battle with certain spells. This, he told Azuth, would save the lives of some mages hitherto forced onto battlefields (but mistrusted by warriors who now would ride without mages, trusting to the *gauntlets* they alone controlled) and make rulers and warlords hunger after and value magic all the more, once they had personally tasted what it could do.

For some years Horgyl dabbled at this project, breaking off frequently to scour the land for mages rising in power that he could humble. Then he seemed to become obsessed with making *power gauntlets*—now flexible metal to-the-shoulder coverings of armor, fitted with retractable claws and spurs—that harbored ever greater and more numerous powers. Just what powers are not certain, but they were thought to be able to hurl forth *cones of cold*, *delayed blast fireballs*, *magic missiles*, *repulsion effects*, *feather fall*, *fly*, and *levitate* abilities, the power to emit beams of light magically akin to full sunlight, and some sort of hammerblow invisible ramming attack. The uncertainty over *gauntlet* powers arises because someone stole all six pairs of Horgyl's most complex and not-quite-completed war gloves—someone his spells utterly failed to trace.

The Magister raved in howling fury, blasting anything around him that so much as moved or cast an unfriendly shadow, for some days—and then set to work on a new, more powerful set of *gauntlets*, attuned so that only he could call upon their powers. These, too, were stolen, casting Horgyl into such despondency that he vowed never to vest so much of his power in mere items again. Instead, he turned to mount a complex and ambitious hunt for the thief . . . a hunt that lasted years but failed—and left him unprepared (doomed, not to put too fine a point on it) for the capable challenger who finally confronted him.

That failure bewildered Horgyl Tusselvarr, but should not have. The culprit made a point of mockingly wearing some magical gauntlets of Stonebeard's own making whenever they met—war gloves that Horgyl, who had acquired the habit of not meeting the eyes of gods, never raised his gaze to notice or recognize. The

thief was Azuth, the High One, and his reason for stealing such paltry items (he told Mystra in front of at least two of her Chosen) was to make the incumbent Magister scramble to strive magically, just as he was forcing other mages to do.

Horgyl perished when a mage challenged him in the mountains, opened a crack in the rock under the Magister's boots as they fought, widened the crack so swiftly that the Magister could not help but fall in—and then forced closed, crushing or entombing Stonebeard.

Azuth is still believed to possess many of this Magister's *power gauntlets*, and to dole pairs out on rare occasions, when he feels a desire to aid a situation in Faerûn with magic.

Haelvar Ildagh

(“Grimskull”)

(reigned 1204–1221 DR)

Stonebeard's slayer was fully as cruel as the Magister he felled. A balding man, vulturelike in appearance (hence his nickname, which he wore with pride, using it more often than his own names), Haelvar's life was a series of bold, swift and vicious spell attacks, backed by carefully planned escapes, alternatives, and schemes for calling on aid if things should go against him. He regarded all life as cattle, to be culled, sacrificed, bred and driven as it would best benefit him, with wizards as an elite herd whose wild natures demanded most of his attention, but whose achievements could make him ever stronger, so long as he fed the best and brightest of them with spells and fragments of research from their fellows.

In other words, whereas most Magisters give magic to the lowliest novices, to broaden the base of magical use without aiding potential challengers-soon-to-be, Haelvar helped the most creative and energetic mages, to see what truly useful spells they could come up with—and plucked those spells as untraceably as possible, both for his own use and to share with other rising mages. This approach gave rise to a cadre of very powerful mages and swift advancements in spellcraft, but did not lead to a larger number of wizards, because all too many of the favored few acted as tyrants, keeping lesser mages down and preventing aspirants from gaining any access to magic at all.

One of them, the wizard Tolann of Shussel, even had the temerity to try to launch surprise attacks and poisonings against his fellow mages at a MageFair—causing a brawl that was halted with Azuth and Mystra manifested openly to permanently *feeblemind* Tolann and two other wizards who had taken advantage of the strife to turn on rivals. The deities then restored the fallen to life, undid the damage wrought in spell-battle, and issued a cold, firm warning to all the gathered wizards as to the spell-sanctity of MageFairs.



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Grimskull was shaken by the divine intervention, and from that moment forth took great care to adhere strictly to the rules and the likes and dislikes of the gods (at least, as much as he could guess at such things—because throughout his rule, Azuth and Mystra never spoke to him, answered his prayers, or sent him visions). Quite late in life, Haelvar Ildagh became lonely, and sought to win himself a mate—preferably a young sorceress who could worship him but lacked the spells to endanger him, whom he could teach magic to and father heirs with. He was engaged in a furtive hunt for possible candidates when one dark-eyed lass who melted into his arms turned out to be a rival archwizard who tauntingly revealed his true shape as he launched the spell that tore Grimskull limb from limb, and gave Faerûn a new Magister.

Isilger Mountrant

(“The Dark Smile”)
(reigned 1221–1274 DR)

Grimskull’s slayer was a tall, slender, agile, and darkly handsome man whose ways and appearance seem taken straight from a bard’s description of “a proudly evil wizard.” Isilger’s drooping, oiled moustache was almost perpetually twisted in a sneer, and his arrogance “preceded him like the brightly flashing blade of a flourished sword,” according to the sage Muroarn of Zazesspur, who met him on several occasions when the Dark Smile swept into courts, revels, and meetings of guilds to which he did not belong.

It is said that Isilger loved to watch others suffer, that he was always alert for behavior he could interpret as an insult to himself that must be punished—and that he often devised treacheries and manipulated folk into fights just to enjoy the spectacle of pain, death, gore, and high emotion.

The Dark Smile is perhaps best remembered today as the creator of *blast globes* (detailed in the “Magisterial Magic” chapter of this sourcebook), whose secrets he gave to a mage of the Zhentarim in 1266 DR. Some folk believe that Mystra cast him out of office and tore the ability to use magic from his brain in punishment for his actions, driving him forth with the pronouncement that “You are more Bane’s creature than mine. Go where you belong.” Syluné of the Chosen, however, says those words are probably what the goddess said when Isilger faced Mystra’s Choice—and that the Dark Smile was slain by a dozen archmages who had met to discuss how to be rid of him, been dumbfounded when he arrived and attacked them without any warning, and scrambled to hurl every spell and magical item power they could muster at him, in a wild battle that claimed eight of their lives—but finally rid the Realms of one of its most feared Magisters.

Thornar Fleetmoor

(reigned 1274–1278 DR)

Foremost among the archmages who slew the Dark Smile was a tall, shy, white-haired mage who was perhaps the first master of what is now called metamagic. Thornar Fleetmoor seemed to have an almost instinctive understanding of how magical energies flow and can be manipulated, and was a genius at understanding and disassembling the magic of others.

Thornar was fascinated by both magical barriers and their breaching, and by enchanted devices. He created many magical flying machines and automatons now used and duplicated by others, and was able to fix such items when their enchantments went awry or essential fabric was damaged. He was a friend to many mages, because he was always eager to help with any magic-related problem, without thought of demanding any price, and (rightly) none of them feared he might attack or spy on them or in any way work against them.

Thornar was slain when a longtime rival (they had both once been apprenticed to the famous archmage Faerdinalar the Enchanter), the wizard Uldinus Lawkland, cast powerful *antimagic* spells of his own devising—and a few created by Thornar himself—on some stones and put them on the crenelations of the battlements of Turnstone Keep, a since-vanished and then-crumbly castle in the backlands of Amn where Thornar had established a school of wizardry.

Uldinus lurked in the woods nearby, awaiting the moment when Thornar would emerge from the castle door. When it came, he blasted the parapet, which fell and crushed the Magister, the many enchanted stones preventing the proper operation of Thornar’s *contingency* magic. It is thought that fear of someday suffering a similar fate prompted several mages of Thornar’s school to destroy what were perhaps the last surviving copies of some of those *antimagic* spells.

Uldinus Lawkland

(reigned 1278–1280 DR)

A “fat, greasy worm of a man,” according to the sage Maether of Ordulin, Uldinus was a glutton whose bloated body, by the time he won the office of the Magister, was held upright and aloft (his boots a good foot clear of the ground) by magical *levitation* devices of his own devising. These were small metal spheres that chimed when turned off or on, fit easily in a palm, pocket, or pouch, and are still occasionally found in palace vaults or collections of magical curios. The secrets of their making died with Uldinus, but almost all that have been found still function perfectly, so long as they are kept supplied with fuel. These lofting balls consume rubies or sapphires, which must be intro-



duced into cavities within the spheres. Although they vary slightly in performance from specimen to specimen, in general a single sphere can hold aloft a lantern, a tray of drinks, or a salver holding keys or quills or letters, but as many as four are needed to hold up a loaded personal trunk, and six to hold aloft a large or heavy man, eight being customarily used under thrones or chairs of state to bear the weight of both furniture and sitter, or under the sort of large, long chests used by wagon merchants.

Uldinus had a catlike, softly smiling face, glittering black eyes customarily hooded under half-lowered eyelids, a little goatee, and black, sharp-cut sideburns. Rings in plenty glittered on his fingers, and his greatest secret—which is thought to have died with him—is that he developed an enchantment that somehow allowed multiple rings to operate together, while on the same body—and even on the same finger! (Up to four, Maether claims, on the same finger at once!)

Uldinus stole a copy of the Simbul's *spell trigger* in 1277 DR. Furious, she set out to destroy him—but by then he had slain Thorne and become Magister. Chosen are not allowed to destroy a Magister purposefully except with Mystra's permission—so the Simbul turned to a ruthless young mage, Ohland Grethgar, and trained him in the best ways to defeat Uldinus. (For this Mystra reproved her, warning her such tactics must not become a habit.)

Ohland Grethgar

(reigned 1280–1282 DR)

A handsome, ambitious, and well-spoken wizard known widely among mages for the interesting small but useful spells of his devising that he demonstrated at every MageFair, Ohland Grethgar was born in Westgate to poor parents, spent much of his childhood on crofts in the Starmantle area (as forests there were cleared and settled ever more heavily by people spilling out of the crowded Inner Sea ports), and met and befriended a reclusive old half-elven woman by the name of Iriskree.

This friend was a sorceress of considerable power, and she taught the youthful Ohland many magics. "The boy had the spark far brighter than most," Iriskree wrote to her last kinswoman, referring to the gods-given, randomly and still uncommonly bestowed aptitude for handling magic that is necessary for any human to wield the Art.

Ohland grew to manhood doing small, useful magic for Iriskree (until her death of a winter fever) and for his family, and his reputation spread. One day he was visited by a hitherto unknown, charismatic man who called himself "the Trapmaster" and offered to take on Ohland as an apprentice—an offer that was eagerly accepted.

The Trapmaster made a very good living casting variant *wizard lock* spells and wardings on coster warehouses and wealthy merchants' shops in Calimshan and the coastal cities around the Shining Sea, so as to prohibit entry to (or raise an alarm upon the forcible entry of) unauthorized beings into a guarded structure. Helmed horrors and dreadlike "partial body" guardians were the Trapmaster's stock in trade, and he also devised something called the "zombie door," wherein a door was bound about with human skin, two or three pairs of human arms were affixed to it, and this assembly enchanted so that the arms could clutch at unwanted passersby, or pull weapons from concealing folds of the skin and strike at beings nearby.

The Trapmaster lacked expertise in magically altering locks (as opposed to linking magical effects to operating or breaking such fastenings) and in creating beams of magic to stab at intruders with any great focus or length (as opposed to such effects merely being conducted only to beings touching or very close to a protected surface or entry point). He hoped Ohland's talents would expand to address these failings, and was not disappointed.

A rising young sorceress who used her beauty, seduction, and poison to advance her power and influence literally over the bodies of more powerful mages ended the Trapmaster's career and landed Ohland in the first real spell-battle of his life.

He barely won, and the experience changed him. As he stood over the smoking body of Jaelaera Sundeirynn, Ohland Grethgar resolved to be ruthless henceforth in all his dealings with Faerûn around him. He would not be an aggressor who went seeking mages to slay and seize magic from, he vowed—but if such came seeking him, he had be ready, "with fire in his hands," well prepared to swiftly destroy them.

For some years Ohland continued the Trapmaster's old trade, acquiring a reputation as mage after mage tested him—and died. The Simbul of Aglarond noticed this young mage who seemed to be a kindred spirit, and kept watch. When at last the time came that the Simbul needed a weapon against the Magister Uldinus, and Ohland was still alive, she went to him and offered to make him a formidable battle-mage indeed, if in return he would be her champion against one wizard she was forbidden to directly harm.

Ohland accepted, and blossomed in power under the teachings of the Simbul. It is thought they became lovers, but as one sage put it, "Twere better not to ask too boldly about such things—and after all, what does it matter, really?" Aided by the Simbul's training and guidance, Ohland slew several cruel Calishite mages, and then laid a trap for Uldinus, luring him with false news of a discovered crypt of hitherto-sleeping-in-stasis



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Netherese lady sorceresses of great beauty, who were surrounded by heaped enchanted items that only they knew how to operate.

Ohland posed as one sorceress, in a crypt aglow with the magic of illusions, and issued a formal challenge when Uldinus appeared.

The Magister promptly fled, but he had already unwittingly triggered a *bone hook* spell of Ohland's devising, that enabled his challenger to trace Uldinus whatever form he took and wherever he went. The Magister was still congratulating himself on escaping the Netherese trick when Ohland appeared—and blasted him.

It was a short duel. Uldinus had come to depend overmuch on his items, and was carrying too few spells and too little practiced in using them.

As Magister, Ohland abandoned traps and wardings, devoting himself instead to traveling the lands between the Sword Coast and the Inner Sea, teaching the rudiments of magic to all who seemed interested—and blasting every mage who attacked him. He was determined to be always ready for a spell-battle to the death, and never to be slain as easily as he had disposed of Uldinus.

When it did come, Ohland's death was a long and spectacular affair. It befell in a battle in the skies over

Orlumbor against the black dragon Starlaurynguldar, who was protected by some sort of antimagic amulet that did not survive the fray—and who eventually tore the Magister apart in his jaws. Sorely wounded, the dragon flew out to sea, seeking an island where he might lie undisturbed to recuperate—but collapsed in the air from his wounds, plummeted into the waves, and drowned. Azuth then offered the office of the Magister to Inhil Lauthdryn.

Inhil Lauthdryn

("Hurler-of-Stars")
(reigned 1282–1294 DR)

Inhil Lauthdryn was a tall, grim man of few words, many kindly acts—and a love for mountain-shattering, castle-disintegrating "big blast" spells. This fascination with swift large-scale destruction earned Inhil his nickname, and made him both widely feared and much spied-upon. As a result, Inhil devised the widely used "shimmer script" cantrip that, when cast on freshly finished written spells or upon the ink that will later be used to write spells, makes actual incantations or enchantment-bearing runes, glyphs, or symbols (but not processes or notes) impossible to read well enough by means of *wizard eyes* (or other means of magical scrying) to copy, memorize, or cast. This Magister also



transformed many castles and city walls into ruins.

Inhil was especially fond of a 9th-level spell he called *towerfall*, which lifted and toppled huge masses of assembled stone (such as castle towers, many bridges, sections of city walls, and the like). Fortunately its secrets seem to have died with him—as has its variant spell *stone fountain*, which drained a magical item to power not just a lifting and toppling of a large assemblage of stone, but a hurling of the stones, so that a section of a city wall could be torn up into the sky thrice its own height and then hurled down into the city, the stones spraying outward in a 240-degree arc (everywhere except for a protected 120-degree sector chosen by the spellcaster).

The Hurler-of-Stars was not particularly interested in dealing death or in harming anyone. It was raw destruction he exulted in. Inhil was just as happy to smash empty keeps as to destroy castles full of folk. This reluctance to shed blood mattered little to rulers of the day. They feared anyone with the potential to so easily level fortresses, regardless of how friendly he might seem at the moment.

Professional slayers in plenty were set on his trail, even as envoys were sent seeking Inhil. Each embassy carried a written offer to engage him to defend one fortress or ruler against all others. Of the few such agents who found the Magister, all were firmly refused, with words that have become a credo: “The might of the Magister is not for sale.”

For more than a decade this gentle man with a taste for playing destroyer reigned as Magister, specializing in aiding fledgling mages by the adroitly left “forgotten spellbook” or “long-hidden coffer of scrolls.” Inhil’s reign ended when he went alone into the eastern Vast (a lawless, monster-infested wilderland at that time) to bring a rogue archmage to justice . . . and was not seen again. Glaragama Dunrohiyr of Calaunt was that rogue wizard. Inhil reluctantly moved to destroy her only after she had openly slain her twentieth archmage and uttered a calm promise to kill four others (whom she named).

Glaragama posed as a man as she served as apprentice to the wizards Sharabirt of Calimport and Restel of Athkatla, the latter after Sharabirt’s death (it is thought from natural causes), but she revealed her true gender and appearance at the same time as she slew the wizard Dardren of Memnon and seized all of his magic.

The ashes of Inhil’s broken staff were later found atop a scorched and blasted knoll. It is believed that Glaragama had acquired some magical means of summoning many dragons to gather, swoop in swift succession at the cornered Magister, and slay Inhil with the cumulative effects of their breath attacks—and that he cast a spell that bound her to him, to suffer the same fate he did wherever her body actually was.

Whatever their fates, Azuth offered the office of the Magister to Aralagath Tarsil of Arabel shortly after the Hurler-of-Stars went into the Vast.

Aralagath Tarsil

(reigned 1294–1306 DR)

Born in the lands of a cruel upland pasha of Calimshan, Aralagath was uncannily beautiful as a young boy and was kept collared and leashed as a palace pet by Pasha Eiruidin Ondaru until the latter’s murder by his own palace wizard, Ongraunnathan the Blind (who saw the world around by means of an enchanted crown that controlled two constant *wizard eyes*) in 1275. The wizard used his spells to make his dead master seem alive, and ruled in Eiruidin’s name for another decade before being unmasked in 1286—and during that time all of the palace slaves (including Aralagath) served as his assistants in working magic, fetching material components and mixing powders, unguents, and inks. Aralagath noticed that all who showed any aptitude for magic were elevated, praised, taught things—and then disappeared.

Guessing that Ongraunnathan was ruthlessly destroying potential future rivals, Aralagath pretended to have no ability to work magic at all. He staged several secret attempts to cast spells that always ended in failures . . . bringing on dejection that he was careful to show the blind sorcerer, repeating these little acts as if he hoped that by trying the same spell over and over it would somehow one day work, until Ongraunnathan mentally dismissed him as too stupid to ever be a threat.

The blind sorcerer had a weakness for whiteworms in wine. That is, the giant white dew-worms of the Tashalar preserved in rose-wine jelly. Most people find this delicacy disgusting, but it is highly favored by a few folk around the Shining Sea, and Ongraunnathan was definitely of their number. Devouring entire jars of whiteworms at one sitting, as he did whenever he could get the rare and expensive, human-head-sized jars, can leave the devourer in a drunken stupor that lasts some hours, and Aralagath developed a keen interest in his master’s dietary habits. Whenever the blind sorcerer was staring and mumbling at an empty whiteworm jar, the young man on a leash was racing to some secluded spot to practice casting spells—such as a *wizard eye* to keep watch over Ongraunnathan’s condition—until the blind sorcerer started to recover.

In this way Aralagath came to basic competency in the Art by the time a sorcerer who dwelt not far away from the Ondaru lands used a spell to turn the flying zombies Ongraunnathan had fashioned from his vanished magically competent assistants against their creator. They rose from the cellars where they had been



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stored to tear the blind mage limb from limb in his own bedchamber—and Aralagath seized the opportunity to flee, clutching three of Ongraunnathan's spellbooks.

The sorcerer sent a handful of zombies after Aralagath to slay the errant servant and fetch back the tomes of magic, but they failed in their task after Aralagath lured them into a busy marketplace where no less than three horrified mages were shopping—mages who blasted them to ashes and bones as people screamed and fled on all sides.

Aralagath hid in remote wooded hills, dwelling in caves and trees, as he mastered the spells in the tomes, and the years passed. Spellcraft came easily to the handsome former pasha's pet, and he quickly developed variants of some of Ongraunnathan's spells that allowed him to *fly forth, invisible* and in *wraithform*, go to a pasha's palace or wizard's tower, nose around with the ability to see, and thus avoid, magical wards, turn substantial to seize spellbooks, and then become an unseen wraith once more, the books also rendered *invisible* and insubstantial for him to steal away with.

Several mages he stole from tried to hunt him down, but Aralagath never took from the same source twice, always copied everything he could, cast spells on the book to confuse all attempts to trace or see the last being to handle it—and then let the hunters find their lost own tomes, sometimes in the satchel of a skeleton tumbled at the bottom of a ravine, or in the cottage of a farmer or forester who had just died of disease or misadventure.

The hermit-mage made the most of his growing library of magic by rewriting the spells into his own variants or even combinations, his grasp of what magic can do and how it can be altered almost instinctive. In a few years Aralagath crafted more spells and rose in power to a greater degree than many mages do in lifetimes of tentative experimentation and toil—but he was astonished when Azuth appeared to him in a forest glade in the middle of nowhere and offered him the office of the Magister. He was not so astonished by his own acceptance.

As Magister, the handsome Aralagath continued to move about, dwelling in various wilderness caves (aided by his discovery of an ancient, other-dimensional, one-room safehold where he could hide, rest, recuperate, study spells, and store his belongings, and which he could step into from anywhere in Faerûn with the right command word, gesture, and contact with either water or stone in the palm of his hand). He was mainly active in the lands along the Sword Coast north of Calimshan, but occasionally ventured east to the Sea of Fallen Stars.

On one such journey, Aralagath created a casting ground. This is an unmarked spot on a Cormyrean hill-

side overlooking the Wyvernwater, wherein spells cast are boosted, and a *protection from evil* ward and a ring of faerie fire-like spheres (light sources that look eerily like will o' wisps) can be called into being by those who know how to do so. They coalesce at the ground and float up to hang in a ghostly mauve-white ring. Aralagath is known to have taught some Cormyrean children who dwelt nearby exactly how to command the powers of his casting ground, and it is also known that some of this lore was passed on to descendants who inhabit the same area today.

Aralagath liked to drop in on lone, weak mages unannounced, teach them a spell and furnish them with a copy of it, and then disappear again. He fully intended to look in on all his students a decade later, and perhaps help them again—but his career ended abruptly in the Year of Thunder when a mage hired to enlarge a flooding mine by blasting a drainage connection through from the mine-tunnels to a known chain of deep natural caverns caused the ceiling of the uppermost of those natural caverns to explode, hurling the trees of the forest above—including one sleeping Magister—to tumble skyward for a few moments and then plunge down into the opened cavern in a roaring, crushing chaos of ruin.

So it was that the office of the Magister passed to a dumbfounded Orten Imdrar, and Aralagath's plans and library passed into oblivion—though his safehold is believed to have survived and presumably still awaits anyone who can find the way into it.

Orten Imdrar

(reigned 1306–1317 DR)

Burly, paunchy, and middle-aged, his white hair always an untidy ruin and his face not much prettier, Orten Imdrar was a hard-drinking, bitter "spellhand-for-hire" when his own miscast spell made him Magister. Employed by a succession of independent caravan-masters as a "trail-mage" to guard their wagons with his spells (and to keep rain off cargo and strengthen shaky bridges), Orten had turned to mining and cellar excavations for a season to let his saddle sores heal when he unintentionally slew Aralagath Tarsil.

At first, he was shaken by the office of the Magister unfolding within him, and then he became suspicious that the gods were sweeping him toward some unknown sacrifice that they had not wanted to waste "a better mage" on. Still later, as nothing continued to happen, he wondered when the Chosen of Mystra were going to show up to give him guidance, or—more likely—escort him to a preordained doom.

When time passed and still nothing of the sort befell, Orten began to think of things he might do in his life ahead (something he had long fallen out of the habit of

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doing, in the grim grind to just get the current job done, stay alive, collect his pay, find another paymaster, and somehow arrange it all so that he did not have to spend winters in places too cold or wolf-prowled.

He began to travel, delighting in taking bird-shape and flying high above Faerûn to drink in its beauties without haste or worries for the first time. For years he wandered, tasting the delights and street life of Waterdeep, Selgaunt, Calimport, and a dozen other cities. Dream-visions gave Imdrar a hazy idea that he was supposed to be spreading magic, somehow, so he took to spying on mages to see what magic they had, so he would know where best to seize all this magical largesse he was supposed to distribute. He also took to spying on apprentices—beautiful females in particular—to try to decide just who should end up being the fortunate recipients of his attention.

Back and forth across Faerûn Orten wandered, enjoying his life of seeing and sampling, until his meanderings chanced to take him into the Border Kingdoms. He was not the first mage whose eyes brightened at tales of the tiny but prosperous realm of High Emmerock and its sapphire-rich Haunted Lake. He was not the first visitor to think it might be an ideal place to dwell in, nor the first wizard to think he could make short work of the lake's spell-hurling zombie, or collapsing lich, or whatever it was, known as the Water Witch. He was, however, the first mage to think he could do so because of the powers he had gained as Magister.

Unfortunately for Orten Imdrar, the Water Witch had other ideas . . . and a lot of expertise in defending her sapphire hoard. Scsilda Starshield, once a Calishite sorceress of some beauty, had been disfigured by a curse that made her flesh crawl and melt away from her bones in an endless, revolting surging and flowing. At first suicidal—and thus reckless in spell-battle—she came to see her curse as a strange way to lichdom, as her ever-melting body neither rotted nor crumbled. Moreover, Elminster of Shadowdale tried to undo her curse and failed, in the process becoming her close friend, perhaps even her lover. So when Scsilda's spells failed to destroy or drive off a mage, she called on a certain Chosen—and he came in haste, ready for battle.

On this occasion, Elminster saw a frightened and therefore furious Orten hurling everything he had at the Water Witch—and setting afire much of High Emmerock in the process. Knowing he was forbidden to strike down Mystra's Magister, the Old Mage used his spells to throw a defensive shield around the Water Witch that would be fatal to anyone blundering into it, and to pluck Qilder Yarven, a particularly obnoxious novice wizard from a nearby Border Kingdom, and place him in the path of Imdrar's latest *cone of cold*.

The bewildered and magically weak Qilder was a ruthless, heartless man—and a thoroughly scared one. He was also never without a collection of seven or more wands sheathed at his belt, and his response to being attacked by a mage he did not know was to draw his two best and let fly, repeatedly and aggressively.

Orten was driven back under the sheer force of the barrage—straight into Elminster's shielding spell, at the same time that Scsilda sent a *spectral hand* at the Magister to deliver a touch-attack spell.

The combination of surging magic caused a momentary chaos of disintegration that took most of the right side of Orten's body with it. The screaming Magister reeled away—and a gloating Qilder tore him apart with a last volley from his wands.

Elminster calmly extended an even stronger shielding over the Haunted Lake, and settled down under it to chat with the Water Witch, leaving Qilder Yarven to tremble alone as the glory of the office of the Magister unfolded within him.

Qilder Yarven

(reigned 1317–1318 DR; a month in each year)

Qilder Yarven began his career with another name, as apprentice to a powerful archmage, the Maermadrar of Sheirtalar, who had many apprentices. There came a night when that stern archmage had one apprentice fewer, as Holbert Gruth (the future Qilder Yarven, who assembled his new name from the names of the first two warriors he met in a tavern, when exhaustion led to a temporary cessation of his desperate flight) slipped out of the Maermadrar's tower with two spellbooks and a small coffer of wands that his master was certain not to appreciate losing.

The escaped apprentice hid in the Border Kingdoms for some years before Elminster practically thrust the office of the Magister down his throat—and his short reign is a perfect example of the follies that beset a weak novice wizard who suddenly tastes true power.

Qilder Yarven knew only one place to hide: the bewildering and ever-changing adventurers' territory of the Border Kingdoms. He also knew it to be a region in which one is always in danger, and was so scared by his own failings as a mage that he soon developed a ruthless "strike first and hard" approach to anyone he saw wielding magic, who ventured within his reach. This met with such surprising success that Qilder soon owned an impressive array of magical items and spellbooks—but he still knew he had been very lucky, and he never lowered his guard for an instant.

Then came that fleeting battle on the shores of the Haunted Lake, and power such as he had never dared dream of gaining. Suddenly Qilder Yarven need no



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longer cower or work slyly. He really *could* smash down castles and humble archmages . . . or so he thought. His third "I do not like this mage's face—let the Realms have to look at it no more" duel was his last, as the polished, flowing-bearded wizard with the superior manner that so annoyed Qilder proved to really *be* superior. Dooms come all too swiftly to those who seek them.

Maldiglas Turntower

("The Magnificent")

(reigned 1318–1322 DR)

This polished, polite man with the sharp brown eyes, the elegant wardrobe, and the long, impressive beard looked very much what a Magister should be—and acted as such, too. Few and weighty were his words, firm his stride, and awesome his disapproving gaze. Rich were his robes, and he was never without a staff half again as tall as his own six and a half feet.

It was Maldiglas who turned the Magister into a politician who called on rulers uninvited and cowed them into aiding mages (usually by removing oppressions that they or their sires had put there). It was Maldiglas who forced warring rulers to make peace—on his terms. It was Maldiglas who publicly reproved mages for using their Art in petty bullyings, and told them of the glories of Mystra's favor to be won if they uncovered—and shared with others—long-hidden magic. Tombs were pillaged and the walls of ruins sundered across Faerûn in the wake of his words, a measure of just how influential Maldiglas the Magnificent became. He is one of the very few mages in history to wear that nickname and never to have heard it used in mockery.

Maldiglas was born in Sembia, moved with his family to Amn at an early age and, when his kin warred over an inheritance, found himself whisked off to Chessenta—and into the heart of a covert little war among wizards there. Among its casualties was a veteran battle-mage by the name of Kheldivur—who fell dead, spellbook dropping from a hand that glittered with still-smoking rings, almost at the feet of the awed, youthful Maldiglas. A youth who resolved to become a great mage then and there snatched what he could from the cooling corpse, and—wonder of wonders, though he knew it not at the time—proved to have the gift of wielding Art.

His rise was swift, and he proved early on to be decisive and swift in battle and in admitting when his magic could not carry farther. In this, he was much valued by his kin, allies, and employers, who were more used to self-aggrandizing braggarts who kept magic mysterious than they were to straight-talking equals who treated magic as a tool and not some great

fateful force that made them better than those who could not wield it.

In time, Maldiglas became slightly arrogant and superior in his manner—but it was a superiority and confidence born of accomplishment, and not merely because he could cast a spell. From the outset he knew he wanted to remain as independent from rulers (who liked to acquire mages, and then leash them to defending lands and thrones) as possible, and make as few real enemies as he could. He also knew that he must keep moving, to see all Faerûn had to offer, and not be trapped into a life or task or loyalty he did not like, merely because he knew nowhere else to go.

For years he wandered, and looked, and learned. One terrible thing he learned was that his body was susceptible to almost every disease he brushed shoulders with—and that magecraft is woefully inadequate to dealing with afflictions and weaknesses of the body. Though he could always earn coins enough to purchase temple attention, his sicknesses were a constant reminder to Maldiglas that he was mortal, and the gods might not give him much time to enjoy Faerûn.

When a sudden whirlwind attack and his startled defense suddenly made him Magister, Maldiglas sat down and thought hard about what he wanted to do and then prayed to Mystra for guidance and approval. She gave it, and he sprang into action like a man running in desperation.

On the one hand, he began his diplomatic visits, thrusting the Magister into the cut and thrust of politics and public attention. On the other, he sent forth a series of *projected images* to die in battle, so mages and others would get the idea that Maldiglas was not easily killed, and his death was never a sure thing. He hoped (correctly, as it turned out) that all but the most persistent would abandon plans of trying to slay him. His dearest, most secret scheme needed time free from having to defend himself—and would eat away at his powers, too.

The Refuges

Maldiglas devised a series of enchantments whose specifics unfortunately died with him and, coupling these with *permanency* spells, began to create a series of invisible refuges from mages scattered across Faerûn. Some of these are undoubtedly still lost, for new ones are being discovered all the time, but the locations and effects of some of them are well known, because Maldiglas left behind some clay message balls with their specifics, to be broken open, one per moot, at MageFairs after his death.

Such a refuge is an invisible area in which special powers operate that are awakened only by the casting of any spell, the unleashing of any magical item power,



or the deliberate breaking of any item that bears a lasting enchantment (for example, a stone upon which *continual light* has been cast). By the grace of Mystra, *dispel magic* spells and other Art-negating or quelling magic always fail if applied to a refuge. The boundaries of a refuge cannot be felt and have no solid existence.

The powers of a refuge benefit all creatures within or in contact with any part of them (in other words, almost wholly outside a refuge but breaching one of its boundaries), not merely mages, and it was written in the message-ball notes that any creature trying to entrap, destroy, alter, or enclose and control any refuge would "suffer at the hands of Mystra," both directly and by losing their ability to call upon the Weave (in other words, memorize and wield spells in the future).

The known, automatic powers of a refuge are to *heal* all hurts upon any being (including the effects of poisons, but not diseases), to purge all *charms*, *geas* effects, *curses*, *feeblemindedness*, and magical *fear*, despair, and other spell-borne alterations and mental influences, and to provide some measure of either heating or cooling the air immediately around, so as to allow the beings in the refuge a level of comfort. This last power will not function if beings desiring a wide variety of differing comfort conditions are present, but will in any case stop winds—even magical *gusts*—from blowing into or

through the protected area. Refuges do nothing to keep spells, monsters or any sort of creature from entering them, but beings hurling spells into a refuge stand in peril of Mystra's curse (as aforementioned).

Most of the refuges created by Maldiglas are spherical domes about forty feet across. Known refuge sites are described below. Maldiglas literally drained himself to death creating these refuges, and is known to have been rewarded by a pleased Mystra, though her clergy have not been told the specifics of his fate after facing Mystra's Choice.

Easting: On a knoll south of town, off the caravan road that rises between two marshes that are shallow ponds in the wet seasons. The knoll is covered with scrub trees. The refuge is in a little hollow at its north end, flanked by duskwood trees.

Elmwood: Just west of the settled area, in the deep woods on the western side of a tiny, deep pool known as Deepstar (because on certain clear nights it mirrors a single twinkling star in its waters), between the massive stump of a long-fallen shadowtop and a twisted, curled felsul that splits into three trunks right at ground level.

Eshpurt: Atop the southernmost of the two small east-west ridges south of the settled area, at its eastern end, where a dirt track crests the hill. Both ridges have been used to mark field boundaries, so the track has a



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gate across it. Just west of the westernmost gatepost, a cluster of brambleberries grows—and just west of them lies the refuge.

Nashkel: South of the settled area, in a stretch of bare, stony ground between the man-high standing stone known as the Staring Ranger and the three black boulders that locals call the Eggs of the Dragon (though they are in truth nothing but stones). Behind the refuge, rocks rise swiftly, cloaked in scrub woodlands, to form the outermost spurs of the Cloud Peaks. There are a few shallow caves well above the refuge, regularly cleansed of wolves and other predators because they command an excellent view of the Trade Way, and once one descends sixty feet or so from these, the trees provide cover the rest of the way down to the refuge. The refuge itself is clearly visible from Nashkel, but lies behind several hedges and a copse of firs, and so is overlooked only by seven outlying cottages.

Neverwinter: In the southern reaches of the city, in the lone remaining vacant lot on Silverlade Street, at its north end where the blueleaf trees grow most thickly, and falls away to the high, crenelated stone wall that marks the rear of the gardens owned by the Melaraunt family. Consecrated to Eldath (and bearing a marker attesting thereto), this rolling, wooded patch of ground is popular with young lovers—and for that reason, and some unfortunate embarrassments for prominent citizens, dogs and other tracking animals are forbidden in "Eldath's Patch."

Saerb: Many lanes run east and southeast out of Saerb, for it is here that wealthy Sembians have their country estates, where they frolic (and dwell when hot summer days make the cities stinking, overcrowded sinks of disease). Far fewer tracks run northwest, into the rising, cliff-studded hills, but one that does is known as "Drunkard's Walk" because it has man-high cairns along it every hundred paces or so, to mark its route in winter blizzards. Half a mile outside Saerb, this track curves around a massive boulder and heads due west—and the refuge lies just south off the road, just west of that boulder. A wooded hollow a short distance to the southwest offers a secluded campsite with a brook.

Silverymoon: The building just east of Mielikki's Glade, in the newer quarter of the city on the south bank of the Rauvin, is an aviary wherein all manners of fowl, and their eggs, are tended and sold by the Helvraunur family. Though this fact is not generally known, they are in fact tenants, and Alustriel is their landlady. The refuge is on the roof of the aviary, between the crystal dome of the aviary's skylight and its five-foot-high rampart. It can be reached both through the shop and up the outside stair on the west side of the building.

Soubar: Due east of the settled area lies Drunster's Well, now blocked up with an untidy cairn of stones so as to stop animals from straying into it and being lost. The well ran dry years ago, as Soubar grew and deeper wells to the west of this one were dug. The refuge lies just east of the cairn, flanked on the north by a curving line of blueleaf trees, and open to rolling fields to the east and south.

Starmantle: Northwest of the settled area, in a little cleft on an otherwise bare and windswept shore, the refuge occupies a triangular depression that leads to a forty-foot drop into a rocky sea, with no safe landing or beaching nearby. Stands of stunted trees dot the coast here, which is cloaked in long grasses, but they do not provide enough cover to prevent a wizard being easily followed to the refuge during daylight hours or on a moonlit night.

Suzail: The refuge lies within the moss-floored hollow center of a thick planting of juniper bushes and other shrubberies that parallels the shore of Lake Azoun immediately north and east of Vangerdahast's Tower. Its use is magically and continuously monitored by the Royal Magician, with the approval of Mystra. Vangerdahast has her permission to arrest beings entering or using the refuge whom he has good reason to believe are working against the realm of Cormyr, its ruling family, and its officials, magic, and important chattels (a throne, crown, treasury vault or royal apartments key, or land deed is important, whereas a bowl or silver spoon stolen from the palace is not).

Tilverton: West of the walled area, just south off the overland road, is a winding ravine choked with boulders and overhung with trees that is locally known as "the Dragonbones." Children are often permitted to play among the rocks when armed adults are near and there is no word or suspicion of lurking goblinkind in the area. Just west of the Dragonbones lie two large blue-hued boulders that rise out of the earth like the fins of some gigantic buried fish. The refuge lies between them, on otherwise open ground. Users are warned that any light kindled in this place after dark can be seen for a long way east and west.

Trailstone: Southwest of the settled area, at the edge of the woods, is an old burial mound, long frequented by will o' wisps and still thought locally to be haunted. The mound runs northeast to southwest, and its southwestern end (the downslope, hidden from Trailstone proper unless lights are kindled, at night) is the refuge. Muttering the name of Maldiglas while any part of the speaker's bared skin is touching the ground anywhere in the refuge causes *dancing lights* that precisely resemble will o' wisps to rise up from that spot, persisting until the name of Maldiglas is uttered again by any being in direct skin contact with the ground. The false

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wisps remain within the refuge, drifting about randomly unless willed to move or become still by their awakener. (This control is quite precise enough to allow the mage to make the false wisps seem to respond to the approach of an intruder, or even to fight a creature.) They serve to scare local inhabitants away from the area if a mage desires it, or to create light for studying spells or other activities.

Waterdeep: The existence of the refuge in Waterdeep is kept as secret as possible, beneath a concealing cloak of wild, exaggerated tavern-tales told only when someone asks about it or claims to know something of it. The refuge is actually located in a cavern deep inside Mount Waterdeep that can be reached only through *gates* (two of which are located in each ward). From inside the cavern one can see out the mouths of the fourteen *gates* that open into its walls and can leave simply by stepping through those archways. From the other ends of the *gates*, one can never see in, and can only be *teleported* to the refuge (instantly, and without error) by whispering or saying the name of Maldiglas as one steps or stands on just the right stone.

Listed by ward, the *gates* are as follows:

Castle Ward: (1) Small, permanently chained-off (with chains anyone can step over or roll or crawl under) "mud sinkholes" between the Watching Tower and the Palace Stables. (2) At the southwestern end of Fetlock Court (past the horse-trough).

City of the Dead: (1) The stone that begins under the right heel of Aghairon's Statue. (2) The "waterdrip wash" stones set under a downspout on the western side of the Mariners' Rest.

Dock Ward: (1) The fish-shaped stone halfway down Odd Street, near its northern edge. (2) The moon-shaped stone set into the mouth of Aline's Way, where it meets Keel Alley.

North Ward: (1) On the west side of the rain barrel that stands against the north wall of the Grinning Lion tavern, just off Golden Serpent Street. (2) Inside a cubicle behind an always open door in the southeastern wall of Farwatch Tower. The cubicle is a tiny, tall bare room whose walls are several feet thick, and it is regularly checked by the Watch for dead bodies, beggars seeking shelter to snore, conspirators, and lovers. The Watch has spread a story about the door being always unlocked because they cannot keep it locked no matter how hard they try: The cubicle is a haunted sentry post.

Sea Ward: (1) A footstone marking the burial of a long-dead Open Lord's faithful guard dog, Rivuryn, which is set into the turf just south of the small stand of trees that lies inside the city wall immediately south of Seaeyes Tower (and is sometimes hidden under a portable wooden bench). (2) A stone half-hidden under a downspout, on the seaward side of the Fanebar, at the

southernmost corner where a narrow passage leads through into Kulzar's Alley.

Southern Ward: (1) The stones just outside the back (south) door of the Midnight Sun tavern, where the garbage is usually piled. (2) The round stone set into the street between Athal's Stables and the city wall guard tower that faces it.

Trades Ward: (1) The huge, cracked paving stone set into the eastern end of Ironpost Street, on its southern edge (right against the wall of the corner building). (2) On the rooftop of The Grey Serpent Inn, just at the head of the back firestair that climbs the outside wall of the building.

Use of the Waterdeep refuge cavern is monitored by apprentices using scrying globes in Blackstaff Tower. Khelben and Laeral have promised the Watchful Order and the Lords of the city that they will only intervene in visits to the refuge if one being attacks another therein (they have made no promises, however, about not magically tracing or spying on users of the refuges, after such beings depart).

The Watchful Order has secretly decided that anyone using the refuge more than twice in any month will be interviewed by senior mages of the Order as to their doings, aims, and current foes (to uncover any possible perils to the Order, the city, or "the prosperity of ongoing trade in the North"). The Order is not above temporarily substituting false stones for the real ones to prevent specific *gates* from operating—particularly when Waterdeep is at war or there is suspicion of immediate covert magecraft hostile to the city.

Phelarnden Ghemelt

(reigned for four months in 1322 DR)

This darkly handsome, sneeringly sarcastic wizard of Tharsult was surprised to be offered the office of the Magister by Azuth, but accepted it enthusiastically, seeing its possibilities for advancing his swiftly rising powers into unassailable supremacy over his chosen corner of Faerûn. Seeing both the little-known magic of Nimbral and the inventions of Lantan as keys to broadening his abilities beyond those of all other mages, Phelarnden resolved to work covertly on magically influencing the minds of rulers and prominent folk of those two island realms, hoping to one day rule Lantan, Nimbral, Tharsult, and whatever mainland shore he could most easily and securely seize (probably the stretch of coast where the Border Kingdoms reached the Shining Sea).

Acutely aware of what a rich and immobile target a mage who tires to rule territory can afford other mages, Phelarnden spent much of his time pondering how best to untraceably manipulate the Twisted Rune, the Brotherhood of the Arcane, or some other cabal of mages into



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attacking other wizardly organizations, notably the Red Wizards of Thay. He needed those groups who do the most spying to be preoccupied in struggles with each other, to keep them from ever mounting a concerted attack on his own holdings. He also hoped to goad them into invading Halruaa, to awaken defenders there and give him a good look at the magic they would wield—as well as unsettling that closed realm enough to allow Phelarnden Ghemelt to slip unobserved into its heart for a little magical raiding.

Phelarnden was also excited by some written accounts he would come across in the crypt of an extinct Calishite family of sorcerers, the Nalabukharn, that spoke of “orbs of power.” These man-sized crystal spheres were said to hold many magical powers, and to be able to learn more. They could operate on their own according to the dictates of their master, allow that master to transport himself instantly to any one of them by speaking the correct phrase, and feed. This latter ability involved touching creatures with crystalline tentacles extruded for this purpose, drained all life from touched victims if it continued for long enough, and robbed the victims of both life energy and any spell-like (natural) magic-wielding powers—a displacer beast’s displacement effect, for example—possessed by the victims. These energies and powers could then be transferred to the master of the orbs, at any time thereafter. The writings hint that Alair Nalabukhar, a daring young son of the family, may still live inside an orb hidden somewhere in Faerûn, his body too mangled to live on but his sentience preserved. They also hint that at least six such orbs still exist, hidden in various desolate, underground places, and that others besides Nalabukhar family members may know how to control them.

Finding these orbs became Phelarnden’s obsession, and he saw the office of the Magister as his means to finally tracking one down. Unfortunately for him, Calimshan and Thay both held other vigorous, ambitious, and ruthless mages who also saw themselves as ruling as much of Faerûn as they could get their hands on—soon. They assailed the fledgling Magister in veritable waves of challenges and surprise attacks, destroying his tower and a succession of manors Phelarnden seized to dwell in—until the day came when the ambitious mage of Tharsult lost a duel and was torn apart over the Shining Sea near his island home.

Phelarnden’s slayer was one Veldribold of Calimport, but he was killed only moments after his victory by Ulraen of Eltabbar. That Red Wizard in turn perished in mid-gloat when two of his fellows summoned monsters to savage him—only to be felled in their turn by a disgusted archmage of Chessenta who had been watching the parade of destruction. So it was that the reclusive

Maxiladanarr Torstren became the Magister and turned his efforts to very different schemes than those that had delighted Phelarnden’s fancy.

Maxiladanarr Torstren

(reigned 1322–1328 DR)

A man of average height, a weathered face, sharp eyes, and permanently unruly black hair and beard, Maxiladanarr was a mage who had explored much of Faerûn by scrying or by expedition, and learned from what he had seen. Perhaps more than any other Magister, he knew what life was like in this or that remote locale, the paths of bird and beast migrations, and where next to best expect a volcanic eruption or the gathering of an orc horde. He saw mage-duels as infantile wastes of training and mage-skills, and preferred study in solitude to swaggering in public or trying to seize political power.

Maxiladanarr’s first act as Magister was to destroy his own tower (which stood in the foothills of the Riders to the Sky, far from any village or hamlet) with fire and lightning, after emptying it of useful magic. He did this to make the more foolish mages of the day think he had been slain.

Thereafter, his style always was to hide both his magic and himself. During his reign Maxiladanarr moved about constantly, calling nowhere home and making good use of the *gates* he was already familiar with, from his explorations. He knew that, as Magister, he had not long to work before some ambitious and overly powerful young idiot struck him down—and he had a dream to pursue: a breeding program akin to that begun by the Magister Olohmber Starnardyn almost two hundred years earlier, to nurture families whose members had the spark of the Art (the ability and aptitude to wield magic) in plenty and build them into clans whose ranks would produce a profusion of mages for the centuries to come.

Maxiladanarr worked tirelessly to manipulate members of one promising family into marrying members of others, and to let useful magical items and a profusion of written spells seemingly fall by sheer chance into the hands of his chosen clans. His efforts paid off with astonishing speed and continue today (with the guidance and assistance of certain shadowstaves, quite possibly including Maxiladanarr himself). The flourishing sorcerous families this Magister aided are known to include the clans detailed hereafter, and are collectively known (among sages and priests of Mystra, not the general populace) as the Incipient Clans.

The Incipient Clans

Belvrost: This clan is based largely in Reddansyr, and for many years its members have been root-crop farmers

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and masons in the area, building many Reddan cottages and owning some that provide rental accommodation for caravan-riders wintering over locally. The best-known and most publicly influential family members are Chasler Belvrost, who owns a flour mill on the River Reddan west of town, and Telgerd Belvrost. Telgerd is one of Reddansyr's "town wizards" as well as its toymaker. His toyshop, The Belled Boot, stands on the corner of Bright Lane and Selver Street.

The Belvrosts tend to a burly build, brown hair and eyes, and broad, "friendly bear" faces—but there is also a strain in the blood that makes some family members, primarily women, grow very slender and to have glittering green eyes and flowing red hair. Almost all have the spark of the Art, and one or two Belvrost of every generation have the innate ability to either read items (perceive mental scenes of past events or beings connected to the items) by concentration or touch, or to send and receive mental messages (by spontaneous manifestation of an effect identical with a *sending* spell). All Belvrost can readily receive and respond to such sendings, and all can also see the mental scenes that a reader passes to them by direct skin-to-skin touch.

The clan is hardy and numerous, with family outposts in Baernwood (a hamlet just west of Telpir, in the Gulthmere's easternmost trees), Redwater, and Nath-lekh. They can whelm perhaps two hundred mages of greater than 3rd level, twenty of these being 10th level or greater. The patriarch and matriarch of the family, Arildan (LG hm W17) and Maelaeve (CG hf W14, née Firlpstar), dwell together at the family manor of Sundstone in Baernwood (a rambling, moss-girt mansion in the trees that is more cave than house). Arildan makes spell scrolls and enchants daggers that fly to strike at his command, at MV Fl 22 (A), AC 3 and 6 hp, disintegrates if killed, 3 strikes per round at THAC0 7 for 1d4 damage each. Maelaeve raises the most tasty "brownflower" mushrooms to be had anywhere (they are considered a delicacy in Athkatla, where they can only be eaten in a far-from-fresh state), as well as concocting a number of medicines that quell nausea, or pain, or wakefulness. One of these, slitherstill, works almost instantly and is much used by kidnappers and thieves. On very rare occasions, it proves fatal to someone it is administered to. Maelaeve does her own seasonings, so her draughts have distinctive flavors, but the recipes she uses are widely known among herbalists, priests, and "wise women" (she is by no means the only source of slitherstill in the region).

Among the younger, more adventuresome Belvrost, perhaps the most prominent are Jadaster (CG hm W8), a successful merchant investor of Telpir whose hobby is lock-spells and constantly improving locks to withstand magical and physical assaults, and Orlimar (NG hm

W9), a wandering adventurer who sports a dashing moustache and tales so rich he would have to have lived to twice his present age to accomplish the daring deeds they encompass. Orlimar does seem to trail gems in his wake and never to want for gear—whereas Jadaster is growing increasingly restless, wanting to travel to find an exotic wife. This urge, by the way, could quite well be Torstren's doing. Down the years, Belvrost after Belvrost, of either gender, has desired to wed magically skilled folk from far places. Even when the marriage fails to last or never occurs at all, offspring with magical talents join the clan.

Belvrost are considered trustworthy stalwart folk, with a touch of strange by many neighbors. Among themselves, Belvrost tend to believe that "Mystra made us special for some purpose she reveals in time to come—perhaps centuries along, yet." They pass down many family legends of skillful and timely spellcasting that won this or that day, and some more elaborate tales, such as the subterranean "Lake Where Dragons Sleep" somewhere under Gulthmere that Narvar Belvrost discovered four centuries ago, or Halbadan Belvrost, who lives beyond death as a whispering wraith, lurking around the mill waiting for someone to help him recover the buried treasure he no longer has hands to dig for . . . something magical and precious that he will not be more specific about.

Chaserperi: Formerly staid weavers and textile merchants in southern Amn, this family has spread to most of the Sword Coast ports north of the Calim Desert and has become one of the breed of traders both colorful and shady who are collectively known as "port rats." Such merchants deal in an ever-changing ferrago of goods and stealthy services both unusual and often less than legal. It can be a short and dangerous career for those regarded by pirates, guilds, city merchants, and dockers as dishonest, but a true port rat is worth his weight in gold bars.

Chaserperi take care to become so regarded, and in this most recent generation are beginning to pursue broader interests, inland—including investing in caravan costers to get from dockside to the uplands. Not surprisingly, the most prominent family members are not working port rats, but Llandur Chaserperi of Neverwinter, a fur trader, warehouse owner, and sponsor of many small merchants, and Ondraer Chaserperi of Athkatla, a dealer in ivory and bone goods (notably coffers, the finest dice, and furniture of the "smooth-sweep" style).

Chaserperi tend to be small, dark-haired, agile folk, restless of temperament but graceful and economical of movement. The Amnian Chaserperi are growing more burly and broader of shoulders as the years pass, but no family members are growing overmuch in height. All



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Chaserperi can feel magic (some of them say they can "smell the tang of it"), both in locales where magic was recently unleashed and when they are near active or permanent enchantments. Almost all can wield the Art, and most are taught minor spells and cantrips by their parents. More than many families, the Chaserperi keep in constant contact with each other up and down the coast, employing both magical and mundane methods. They number perhaps one hundred seventy capable mages, the majority being of 6th to 9th level, with perhaps twenty to thirty being of 11th to 14th level. To this can be added almost a hundred children who can cast a spell or two and bid fair to rise to some skill-at-Art in years to come.

The patriarch and matriarch of the Chaserperi, Faereldan (LN hm W14) and Chancereene (CG hf W15, née Sorcontor), dwell together in a modest house on Skellin Street in Athkatla, its only mark of wealth being the private walled garden behind it where once someone else's house stood, fronting onto the next street. Faereldan is an old man whose memory is beginning to fail him. He knows this, and it drives him to black rages and occasional tavern drink-all crawls. He and Chancereene have always fought verbally, in a biting but loving fashion, and she is now handling both the

daily affairs of the Chaserperi investments and writing endless notes for her husband to carry in his palm (of the names of people he will be meeting with, and what they stand for or want, and what his own response or position must be). These swiftly penned missives even sport lifelike facial sketches of the people described, so her husband can match a person with the name his memory will no longer retrieve. She has also been covertly testing all the Chaserperi men of the generation following hers to see who has the character to lead the clan when Faereldan fails or dies.

Among those Chancereene is considering for head of the clan are the sarcastic and darkly handsome Elvrado Chaserperi, who turned his hand to wines and has become a respected vintner (his lands in upland Amn produce the splendid dry white vintage sold up and down the Sword Coast as Old Blue Stag, as well as many sweet berry wines sold locally and anonymously), and Tlaverlt Chaserperi of Murann, who makes and ships prodigious quantities of fine olive oil.

The Chaserperi avoid publicity whenever possible and have no high social profile. Discreet inquiries of neighbors the length of the Coast, however, yield the opinion that this family is "old, trusted money" and that its members are sharp-witted and in the know, so

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that they can get things done. Family members see themselves as doing deals both necessary and profitable, deep in the cut-and-thrust of mercantile commerce, which is—with a few exceptions—right where they all want to be. The airs of nobles and the desperate aspirants to nobility are ludicrous, though politeness is simply good policy when one must trade with such folk, and there is no need to be dishonest or overly forceful in business dealings. Profit flows past in an ever larger river, for those who just know how to steer.

A few Chaserperi desire a quieter life of study or craftwork. There are family members in Candlekeep and working as scriveners in several Sword Coast cities, and there are also Chaserperi potters and fineweavers.

The family shares countless tales of swindles and deft commercial deals and revenges taken upon mercantile rivals, but magic-related legends are surprisingly few. Auldo Chaserperi is supposed to have discovered a lich in the cellars of a North Ward house he purchased in Waterdeep, some sixty years ago, and to have struck a bargain with it, in which the family brought it materials it desired (including dead bodies), and in return it helped to defend Auldo's warehouse in Dock Ward. The Chaserperi who dwell in Waterdeep today keep very quiet about such things, but presumably the bargain still stands, and the lich still walks.

Melegor Chaserperi is supposed to have found a secret way into Candlekeep (a complicated series of gates through trapped extra-dimensional spaces, not a tunnel or hitherto unknown secret door), and to have wangled "forgetting all about it" into a position within the community of Candlekeep, where Chaserperi still tend the stables, move hay and dung, and do the many minor repairs necessary to keep the buildings sound. There are also, according to Melegor, secret passages within the walls of Candlekeep itself, but to discourage unauthorized family visits and the consequences of such activities being discovered, he has never said exactly where these covert ways can be reached from, or where they go.

Dauntrael: Prominent courtiers in Tethyr until their ranks were thinned by the bloodletting of the Ten Black Days of Eleint and the year that followed, the Dauntrael were envoys of and advisers to King Alemander IV. Some of them died fighting in his service as mages and warriors, and at least two perished in Castle Tethyr, vainly fighting the flames that gutted it. Today, two surviving branches of the family serve King Haedrak in the same way (though they have yet to ascend to the exalted ranks their predecessors held under Alemander), and other Dauntrael dwell in Westphal and in Kingsbay, in the Moonshaes (where they own extensive farmlands, let to tenants to farm, and have a publishing business, The Curious Eye, that produces copies of

many popular lorebooks and works of philosophy). The owner and chief scribe of the Eye, Immrult Dauntrael, has a growing reputation among sages, scribes, and readers up and down the Sword Coast, and Aelbronter Dauntrael was recently knighted by King Haedrak for his capable services in reorganizing royal lines of communication in the sensitive eastern reaches of Tethyr.

Members of the Dauntrael family tend to be tall and slender, with flowing brown hair that under certain lighting conditions seems almost purple or blue. A few Dauntrael ladies in Tethyr use dyes to make their hair a soft blue in the seasons of summer revelry. Dauntrael always have large, liquid brown or blue eyes, tend to be more comely than average, and usually have mellifluous voices, suited for singing or oration. Only a little more than half of all Dauntrael have the ability to wield magic, but those who do have it tend to rise swiftly in power, and they exhibit great creativity and success in crafting or modifying spells. There are today about seventy Dauntrael mages, and over fifty of these are of higher than 10th level. The clan is spreading east, household by household, recently settling in Iriaebor, Priapurl, Suzail, and Yhaunn.

The patriarch and matriarch of the Dauntrael, Thurlad (CG hm W18) and Deluma (CG hf W17, née Lharaunta), dwell together in a mansion they call Steelbreeze. It stands in a walled garden estate, tucked into rolling coastal hills, southwest of Beregost, and is home to some twenty Dauntrael. They can muster a dozen powerful mages and more than eight veteran warriors. Brigands seldom trouble the vicinity for long.

Thurlad's love is gathering information about Toril. An orrery (mechanically animated model) of Realmspace occupies the domed upper room of his tower, and his head probably contains more lore about where rivers flow and mines can be found than all the tomes of Candlekeep. He cares not at all, however, for names and dates and the deeds of men, save when such strivings pertain directly to the advancement of magic. His wife Deluma grows fruit in her gardens, helping them along with gentle light- and heat-altering spells, as a hobby (her husband has no hobbies), and devotes her work time to achieving an ever better understanding of the Weave. This has thus far enabled her to see if planned spells will work (and if so, how), and what effects intended modifications will have. She can already tweak her spells to attain the same sort of precise control over them that a Magister can (for example, doing maximum damage or minimal, just as she chooses), and she could probably, given the time and interest in doing so, craft the equivalent of a Cormanthian spell-web (a construct that links many cast but hung spells, to take later effect when certain conditions are fulfilled).

The future leaders of the Dauntrael—if they survive



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long enough—are probably the brother and sister warrior-mages Tabast and Tethlae Dauntrael (both CG W15), who now dwell in Priapurl and have begun to offer “mageguard” services for specific goods packages being shipped overland between the Sword Coast and the Inner Sea, and for entire caravans. They do not accompany the package or caravan, but send a special long-range and long-duration *projected image* along to trace what they are guarding, serve as their eyes if need be, and to cast some preparatory spells for their arrival. Mageguard Services agree to appear on the scene in haste if summoned or if they detect something amiss, and hurl spells as necessary to protect or salvage what they are contracted to protect. This includes whirlwind attacks employing a full range of magical wands, rings, and staves, as well as their own battle-spells. They can also use shapeshifting magic to disguise themselves and accompany or stalk the caravan, ready to repel repeated attacks, but such time-consuming pursuits are not their favorite tactics.

The Dauntrael are skilled diplomats, very good at making neighbors and business colleagues like and value them. As a result, they are highly thought of, as good folk to have around who are both generous and capable. They try not to keep too high a profile, and for the most part people take them for granted, part of the rightful and proper furniture of the local landscape.

Members of this clan, however, see themselves as a family specially gifted by Mystra for some as yet unknown purpose, and they regard it as their duty to rise in local influence (while attracting a minimum of fame or attention) and in skill-at-Art, crafting scrolls, potions, and more permanent items whenever they have the time and means to do so. At the same time, they have a strong independent streak. Dauntrael should be free to marry whomever they please, dwell wherever they please, and do whatever they please.

Most fireside family tales center on clever “save the day” uses of magic by Dauntrael in various crises, but the most important family legend concerns Shalima Dauntrael of Baldur’s Gate, who chose never to marry, but to have a child ere she grew too old to conceive. The darkly handsome partner she chose deceived her in many ways. “He” was in truth a marilith, and the child Shalima carried was a cambion. Discovering this well before the birth that would have slain her, the Dauntrael sorceress used every spell she had, or could steal, or could beg or bargain out of a dozen mages she confronted, to alter the nature of her child but not slay it. Her efforts resulted in her own survival, and a male human child, Hemtor, who had only a few tanar’ri characteristics. Perhaps luckily for both Faerûn and the Dauntrael, Hemtor (a wild one in temperament, who became a hiresword and died fighting pirates on the

Sea of Fallen Stars) proved to be sterile. Shalima’s tale is told to all young Dauntrael when they despair, or rebel, or quail before something, as an example of the true Dauntrael spirit: This is a family that “never surrenders or gives in, but does what it must and can to win the day.”

Klaeverdar: Defiantly common “simple folk” who farm and herd in the uplands near Secomber, Elturel, and Amnwater, the members of the hard-working Klaeverdar clan are the last people most observers would think of as potential or practicing wizards. Hard-working farmers who keep to themselves, tirelessly walk their lands to keep an eye on every last fox or hawk hunting it, count their coins, and have no use for fashions or fancies, the Klaeverdar keep their magic as secret as possible. Three elderly brothers head the three branches of the family: Keldeln at his Snowhills Farm northwest of Secomber; Baerbuckle at Oldturret Farm northwest of Elturel; and Olbrinhannar at Summerfields east of Amnwater.

Klaeverdar tend to be thick-bodied, burly, hairy folk, gnarled and leathery as they age. The men grow paunches and go bald early, and their arms grow longer than those of most humans. Nothing in the sizes of their hands, feet, or features would ever evoke the word “delicate.” Most wear fringed beards and dress in much-patched leathers; all carry weapons. The women who marry into the clan are of all shapes and sizes, but their children tend to be wholly Klaeverdar in looks and build. More than three-quarters of all Klaeverdar children are male.

This farming clan regards most mages as troublesome children whose reckless selfishness are responsible for much of the strife and grief in Faerûn today. They want nothing to do with magecraft, tutoring, and ordering others about. However, all of the Klaeverdar blood can feel magic being cast or awakened nearby, all of them have a natural magic resistance (2d12+20%), and one in eight family members have the spark. These few will be privately handed a spellbook by one of their elders, and told to go somewhere secluded and study and practiced for the good of the family.

The result, today, is some forty mages of 5th to 7th level and spells of daily usefulness, plus about a dozen Klaeverdar of twice those levels. These powerful few are called “the Gifted” within the family, and the best battle-spells the Klaeverdar can find, seize, or steal are given to them, so as to create secret defenders of family holdings against the depredations of monsters, brigands, and passing wizards.

One of these, Gueladdeth (CG hf W17), is the matriarch of the family. She dwells in the ruins of the old keep that gives Oldturret Farm its name, keeping hidden spellbooks and magical items there (family

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legend insists these are stored down crawl-tunnels reached by pulling out loose blocks deep down in the walls of the keep's well), and guarding herself and the farm with six utterly loyal trained wolves whom she communicates with magically. She has accumulated a surprising collection of wands, rods, smaller, worn-on-the-body magical items, and it is whispered at family gatherings that she spends much of her time magically spying on the doings of mages up and down the Sword Coast, trying to see where magical items might lie lost or hidden, that she might *teleport* herself to them and snatch them up. She also breeds goats that have been trained never to devour anything containing any sort of paper, or anything at all indoors. Family legend insists that disobedient family members are sent to Gran Gueladdeth for discipline—and spend some months *polymorphed* into just another of her goats.

The only family members generally viewed as possible successors to Gueladdeth are Meldrethe Klaeverdar of Summerfields (NG hf W14) and Andrath Klaeverdar of Snowhills (LN hm W12), both of whom have crafted many new spells and enjoy spellcasting for its own grace and power. Meldrethe even likes to "ride the storms," flying and hurling *lightning bolts* while protected by spells of her own devising that keep her from harm as natural storm lightning courses through her.

The Klaeverdar are seen as solid, honest farmfolk by their neighbors, and as "backcountry idiots" by many city folk. There are rumors of strange goings-on at all three farms, but no general knowledge of the clan's aptitude for magic. The family sees keeping cities small and the land stable and in balance as the future they should work for. They know they need stronger magic to defend themselves in the future—the next orc horde is overdue, for one thing—and are on the watch for magic they might glean from dying mages, battles, and the like.

Clan lore among the Klaeverdar concerns itself mostly with the cleverness and perseverance of past family members and not with "Our Family Secret," but there are a few family legends that involve magic. Perhaps the most famous is Jaedreene's defense of Oldturret against a small army of "evil ones out of Dragonspear." Jaedreene was the Klaeverdar matriarch of her day and spent her life in slaughtering the raiders who attacked the family farm expecting easy meals from its livestock. It was in this titanic night-long battle that the turret was blasted to ruins—and Jaedreene forced several family members into beast-shape, and flight, for their own protection. Not all of them were later found and restored... so "lost" Klaeverdar blood may well be alive, somewhere in Faerûn, for later clan members to find.

Phaerdinzer: A city-dwelling clan whose members have always been shopkeepers dealing in furniture and medicines (and often tried their luck at selling other things), the Phaerdinzers have always openly practiced a little magic, but never admitted to the wider world that their ranks contain anything more than "lackspell casters" or hedge-wizards. The most prominent Phaerdinzer is probably Tathtaklo of Berdusk (LN hm W17), whose shop, *The Shining Sword*, has sold the sometimes magical discards of slain adventurers for over a decade. The Harpers took a keen interest in the shop from the day it opened, perhaps suspecting something shady in its proprietors or sources, but Tathtaklo is careful to craft only small and subtle enchantments. A typical bladed weapon from his shop would have a +1 bonus, *blueshine* and *everbright* treatments, and emit a faerie fire-like glow of hue, intensity, and duration under the mental control of the wielder. The owner of the shop, who looks and acts like a shopkeeper, not a mage, always swears that he only sharpens, cleans, and polishes weapons. They are otherwise "as is," and any enchantments they exhibit were there before the items came into his hands.

Phaerdinzers are numerous and take various sizes and shapes. The family characteristics are sharp features (with aquiline or tip-tilted noses), gray, ice blue, or emerald-green eyes, and brown, auburn, or red hair. Almost all family members can be mages, and have at least four natural, spell-like powers: They can emit *silence* (covering themselves only) at will, though most find it very tiring, work short-range *telekinesis* (20 feet at most, light objects only), and use *levitation* or *feather fall* on themselves only. In addition to these powers, every second Phaerdinzer has an additional power, usually *dancing lights*, *detect invisibility*, *ESP*, *invisibility*, *locate object*, *spider climb*, or *sleep*.

The six hundred-odd Phaerdinzers of today can whelm perhaps two hundred mages of accomplishment (8th level or higher). Most never develop their wizardry beyond a handful of spells. They are all descended from a family that interested Torstren because they had served a long-ago archmage who had experimented on them with multiple enchantments, *polymorphs*, and the like until "their veins ran with magic" and their offspring began to exhibit spell-like powers. One consequence of this is that no Phaerdinzer ever need make a Constitution check for any change of his or her body shape or state. Torstren determined that bombarding people with magic does not usually pass any magical powers onto them. There must be something special about the Phaerdinzers or the spells used by the long-dead archmage.

The patriarch and matriarch of the Phaerdinzers are Othlo (LN hm W19) and Jasurra (CG hf W16), who



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dwell together in Tallstones, a manor house in Athkatla whose perpetually closed doors and shuttered windows hide a world of drifting *dancing lights*, gloom, and a happy, well-preserved old couple who fly about everywhere, never wear clothes indoors, and delight in aerial acrobatics and dances with each other to tunes played by unseen, enchanted instruments. From time to time, they go out to shop and to hear new music (to add to the soft music that fills the rooms of Tallstones). Retired from long and successful careers as shopkeepers, they are content to magically spy on certain influential and underhanded moneylenders of Amn, and they quietly shift their own investments in accordance with what these people they call "the faceless heartless ones" do. In this way, they have grown very rich—wealth used to support other family members in their ventures.

Their natural heir as head of the clan is Dartabba Shoukyn of Esmeltaran (CG hf W15), a Phaerdinzer who outlived her reckless warrior husband (who was the last of his own family) to raise a family of six children on "nothing at all." She did it by altering the gowns of fashionable ladies so that one garment could achieve six or more looks, appearing "new" each time, before its retirement. By using her beauty and superb dancing skills to serve as an escort to many of the bored husbands of those fashionable ladies and by fencing stolen goods.

Whenever a Phaerdinzer is seen using magic by a nonfamily member, they always explain away their actions by explanations akin to "Something I bought; very expensive. Came all the way from Thay!" They have thus far managed to be seen as dabblers in magic rather than proper mages, or a sorcerous family, and would like to keep things that way. Most neighbors or clients of the various Phaerdinzer establishments see this family as eager, ambitious merchants who love their work. Phaerdinzers see themselves that way, too, and think their magic is some sort of private joke played by the gods on them—that some generations hence, if they are lucky, they will be "let in on."

Maxiladanarr Torstren may not be the most famous of Magisters, but his breeding program looks likely to have influences far beyond the strivings of most who have held the office of the Magister. He perished not by magic or the hand of a challenger, but buried in an avalanche while he slept on a mountain ledge. Torstren is the black-bearded Magister pictured on the cover of the out-of-print publication FR4: *The Magister*.

Imrul Athelzedar

(reigned 1328–1354 DR)

A wise and careful mage sensitive to the needs and desires of others all his life, Imrul was less powerful than many mages when Azuth came to offer him the office of the Magister—but far more caring and hard-working than most.

His long reign as Magister saw him study the state of Faerûn more than most of his predecessors in office, and he acted accordingly. Much of Imrul's time was spent flitting all over the Realms aiding and slaying and leaving magic to be found like a craftworker endlessly putting the finishing touches on a carving. His researches and diligent prayers to Azuth and Mystra led him to learn of Torstren's clans, and he worked to guard and nurture them insofar as he could do so without ever being detected. His efforts to bring together suitable young lasses of magical skill with various ardent young males of the Incipient Clans are masterpieces of subtlety.

Imrul chose his successor with care and subtlety, too, sacrificing himself (as recounted in the chapter of this book titled "The Magister Now") to bring about a transfer of the office to the best candidate he could find—who, like himself, was of more character and diligence than magical might. Azuth has spoken of Imrul, who is now thought to be a shadowstaff, as "one of the most diligent gardeners of the plot that is Faerûnian magecraft."

Nouméa Drathchuld

(reigned 1354–1370 DR)

A gentle, studious and shy woman, never a battle-mage, Nouméa was truly a "Lady Magister." Given her shy and nonviolent nature, her long reign is something of a surprise. Some of her longevity can be attributed to the chaos of the Time of Troubles, wherein Mystra fell and another mortal rose to become the new Mystra, and many ambitious mages had their own skins to keep safe and too many foes too near at hand to go hunting sorceresses with grand titles.

The new Mystra invited Nouméa to become a Chosen, and the Lady Magister accepted. In doing so, she gradually relinquished the office of the Magister. Since leaving office, she seems to have remained close with both the god Azuth and her fellow Chosen, Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun. More of Nouméa and of her successor, the current Magister, is told of in the next chapter in this book, "The Magister Now."



Recent History

In the Year of the Bright Blade (1347 DR), Imrul Athelzedar grew weary of being Magister. It saddened him to slay so many young mages, and he was tired of running and hiding. Whenever he stopped doing so, the young mages came down on him in their dozens again. Therefore, he turned his attention to working on a spell that would utterly hide a wizard from all seeking with layers of misdirection and nullification. It took him five summers to perfect the spell, a 9th-level spell that he wryly called *Athelzedar's Rest*. When he was done, he went seeking an apprentice he liked the character of, and found a suitable candidate in Silverymoon: Nouméa Drathchuld, a shy and gentle librarian in the Vault of the Sages. He saw past the silent grace and poor eyesight that led most folk to dismiss her as no more than mobile, obedient furniture, noting the careful and dogged researches she was undertaking (in addition to her assigned work) to piece together scraps of long-lost magical lore. For a nonmage, her work was impressive. Athelzedar saw that she understood the forces of the Weave, and how mortals could take hold of them, better than many veteran mages with dozens of crafted spells to their name.

How better could he serve the Realms than to set such a one as Magister, cloaked as best he could manage with his hiding spell? He called on Azuth for advice and discussed his plan. The High One seemed very pleased and called upon Mystra. On his knees before two gods, Athelzedar swore to become Nouméa's "guardian spirit," becoming a shadowstaff on the spot, if Mystra would make Nouméa the next Magister.

Mystra promised him his chosen fate, but said that Nouméa Drathchuld must be tested first. He should approach her with no word of what he intended for her, but offer to be her master, and tutor her as he would any apprentice. Mystra would see to it that Nouméa's powers developed as those of incantatrixes do (as well as mastering what Athelzedar taught her), and in so doing arrange her own tests of the young apprentice's morals, resolve, and resourcefulness.

So it was, late in the Year of the Dragon (1352 DR), that Athelzedar approached Nouméa, not revealing that he was Magister or anything of what he, Azuth, and Mystra intended for her. She was awed and afraid she would be too weak and blundering to make a good apprentice, let alone a mage, but she agreed to serve and to learn.

Her powers developed with a speed that astonished Athelzedar. He knew this success could have come only from a great natural aptitude, not from Mystra's covert aid alone. He threw himself into teaching her with zeal and drove her hard, knowing their time together would





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not be long enough for all he hoped to impart. Most of all, he taught her what her duty was to all who had not yet tasted magic. It is from this brief time of their backlands travel, studying in caves and around campfires, that so many of the spell scrolls now found in many mages' hands date. Hundreds of farmers, woodcutters, and local merchants in the Dalelands, the Sword Coast North, and the eastern uplands of Amn keep one or two scrolls safe for trade or to give to any local lad or lass who shows a grasp of magic, though they themselves cannot use the magic.

There came a time at last, in the early autumn of the Year of the Bow (1354 DR), when despite Athelzedar's carefully renewed spells of concealment upon them both, one of the archmages hunting for the Magister found them.

Eron Ingrym of Sheirtalar wielded mighty spells, for all that he was young in years. Vigorous and vicious in their hurling, he had prevailed against many other mages and taken their magic after destroying them. When he came down upon the Magister, striking without warning rather than issuing a formal challenge, Athelzedar seized upon the opportunity to cloak Nouméa as best he could by working the strongest spell he'd ever crafted, binding the energies of all the magic both he and his attacker carried into fueling an *Athelzedar's Rest* of greatly lengthened strength and duration.

Then he bade her farewell, in his last seconds, and told her to thrust her dagger into both their backs—as his own magic held the bodies of both mages together and consumed them—and thereby become Magister.

Weeping and reluctant, she did so, and fled that place as Lady Magister Nouméa—a gentle soul, unchanged in ambition by her new title. She determined to continue as she had done under Athelzedar, wandering alone and unheralded among common folk and novice mages, serving them with her spells and teaching mastery of small, everyday spells, so as "to make apprentices as plentiful as trees." She also sought to bring on a new era of plentiful magic, wherein wizards would be too numerous to wield great individual power, or become tyrants able to keep others from rising in sorcery, or hold thrones with their Art and by their ruling cruelties make magic hated and feared in their realms.

For four seasons the Reluctant Magister served Mystra and all practitioners of the Art in this manner, flitting about the Realms, stopping only to write new scrolls or raid another cache of magic left by an earlier Magister or other long-dead mage. (Azuth, who normally reveals such things only to Magisters who are desperate and in his judgment deserve a little aid, told her of them freely, volunteering such lore every night, as his shy ex-librarian traveled across lands shrouded in

night, fretting because she saw herself as able to do so little in helping common folk rise to mastery of the Art.)

Her own powers, of course, advanced but little in these years of service, and so it was that she was too weak to stand forth during the Time of Troubles (in 1358 DR). As she told Elminster then (as seen in the novel *Shadows of Doom*), "I have little love for war, and less skill at it." Lessened as he was in the Fall, Azuth did what he could to shield Nouméa against all the perils of that dark time, deeming that ensuring the survival of Mystra's power and of her "Gentle Teacher" Magister to be the most crucial work of—and perhaps the reason for—his existence.

After the crisis, a newly ascended Mystra saw the great value of Nouméa's work and character, but knew she herself could not act to protect her Lady Magister, since the former mortal known as Ariel Manx was too overwhelmed by her own new and unfamiliar powers to spend the time and power necessary to shield one still-timid, hesitant woman from all the mages scouring the Realms in the wake of the Troubles.

So it was that Mystra offered Nouméa the Choice. Nouméa was deeply moved by the honor, and she asked to be allowed to continue to serve the Lady of Mysteries. Mystra saw what was in her Magister's mind and granted Nouméa her fondest wish. The Gentle Teacher would continue in that role as an exceptional Reborn. The immortal Nouméa wanders the Realms to this day, teaching folk of the wonders of the Art. Once, in a conversation with Elminster, she remarked on her role: "If the Chosen be Our Lady's crusaders, then I am content to be her missionary."

Nouméa is immortal, but she can be killed through violence or accident. She retains her levels and spells as a mage, as well as the magic resistance, bonus spells, and spell immunities from her time as Magister. In all other respects, she is a Reborn who retains all her memories. Any further powers and abilities of the Gentle Lady of Mystra are left to the DM to detail.

Nouméa also still looks as she did in the past, with one difference. A bold streak of silver runs through her hair from each of her temples.

Mystra soon bade Azuth begin preparations for a Magister, and on the twenty-third day of Marpenoth in the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR) Azuth declared the office vacant, his announcement ringing forth from every altar consecrated to himself or to Mystra, all over Faerûn. He said nothing of Nouméa's fate or of her successor.

The High One forthwith went to the foremost (in suitable character, not the most powerful, influential, or even the most creative) of the mortal mages he had secretly been watching and asked her to become Magister. On the night of the twenty-fourth day of Marpenoth, Talatha



Vaerovree of Innarlith agreed to become Magister, and the mouths of Mystra announced this in every temple and holy place.

The wheel has turned once more, and Faerûn has a new Magister of Mystra. Nevertheless, there is no shortage of candidates who wish to take the title from her. As Nouméa once termed them with a sigh, "So many dooms, circling hungrily about me." It remains to be seen if Mystra guards her new Magister, or if Talatha bids fair to fall as swiftly as some past Magisters have, the moment that ambitious Red Wizards, Zhentarim, or other cruel, powerful mages find her.

Talatha Vaerovree of Innarlith

Human female 16th-level wizard

ARMOR CLASS: 7

MOVE: 12

HIT POINTS: 46

THAC0: 15

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

ALIGNMENT: Neutral good

Str 15, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 16

Spells Typically Carried (5/5/5/5/5/3/2/1): 1st—*color spray, comprehend languages, magic missile, mending, spider climb*; 2nd—*continual light, ESP, flaming sphere, spectral hand, strength*; 3rd—*fireball, fly, hold person, lightning bolt, tongues*; 4th—*Evard's black tentacles, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, polymorph other, wall of fire*; 5th—*airy water, cone of cold, hold monster, telekinesis, teleport*; 6th—*chain lightning, eyebite, project image*; 7th—*spell turning, teleport without error*; 8th—*polymorph any object*.

Talatha also commands the powers and extra spells of the Magister, including the following spells that she can unleash without casting and regain without study: 1st—*magic missile*; 2nd—*ESP*; 3rd—*dispel magic*; 4th—*minor creation*; 5th—*teleport*; 6th—*contingency*; 7th—*limited wish*; 8th—*symbol*. Specifics of her other powers appear in the "Magisterial Powers" chapter of this book.

As Magister, Talatha also has 44% magic resistance and absolute immunity to the following spells: 1st—*magic missile*; 2nd—*web*; 3rd—*fireball*; 4th—*ice storm*; 5th—*magic jar*; 6th—*flesh to stone*; 7th—*limited wish*; 8th—*maze*. As a recently ascended Magister, she may also have absolute immunity to all spells of particular schools (depending on the date upon which she is encountered) and is immune to all Enchantment/Charm (and other mental influence) spells.

Weapons of Proficiency: dagger (carries one in each boot, one at her belt), darts (carries three, slung on a baldric on her left shoulder), sling (carries one in boot pouch, one on belt, and belt pouch of 20+1d4 stones).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: artistic ability; cooking; dancing; direction sense; languages, ancient; reading/writing; singing; spellcraft; swimming.

Equipment: Talatha carries a modest wardrobe (a greatcloak that can be slung on two staves to form a tent of sorts, a tunic and breeches, two spare gowns, a blanket, spare boots), cooking pots (one containing sacks of spices in a water-shedding bag, another carrying kindling in the same sort of bag), a small cleaver, a sack of rags, and a belt of coins. As Magister, she has access to much magic and handsome amounts of coinage when she can get to a cache left by a previous Magister or to a temple of Mystra. Temples traditionally furnish Magisters with warm baths, changes of clothes, beds, a meal, and modest coinage. Unless ill, Magisters typically refuse the bed so as not to bring danger to the temple—although ground holy to Mystra is not considered a fitting locale for a duel, there have been challengers who ignored that stricture, and did considerable damage in their attempts to slay an incumbent Magister.

Talatha has two identical "plain as dirt" traveling spellbooks that contain the spells given here and 1–3 other spells of each level. She also has a grand, complete set of spellbooks buried under a stable midden in Innarlith, and she knows where two powerful Magisterial spellbooks are hidden (one near Suzail, and the other in the Rat Hills near Waterdeep). Azuth has also shown her a *teleport* "loop" atop Maiden's Tomb Tor, east of Waterdeep, that will transport only a Magister or a Chosen to the spellbook in the forest north of Suzail (to other creatures, neither the teleport nor the "cupboard" that holds the book exist).

Magical Items: Talatha carries a *dagger +2*, and wears a *ring of regeneration* and two rare items. These are the *Eye of Angalar* gained during her adventuring days, and the *girdle of fire* from a tomb Azuth directed her to in the Orsraun Mountains, wherein lay the crumbling skeleton of Nellauna Orbrynsar, a renegade Netherese sorceress.

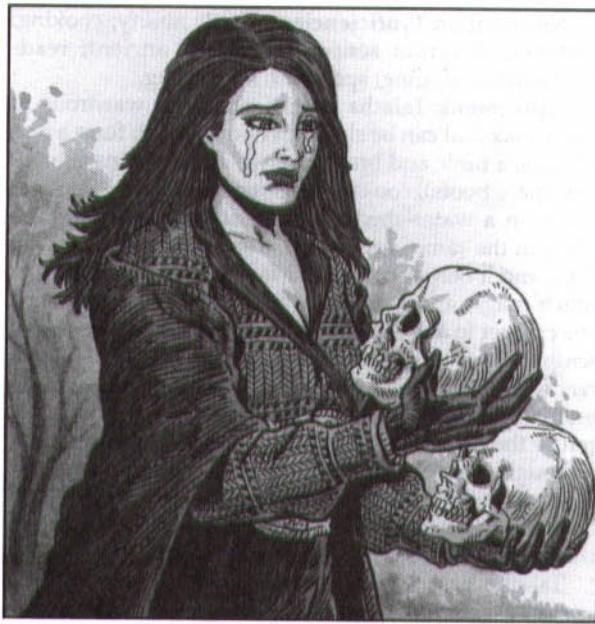
Eye of Angalar

XP Value: 2,500 GP Value: 12,500

This gilded-steel cloak-pin can be hidden under clothing or worn openly. As long as it is somewhere on a living being's body, its powers can be called upon. (Talatha typically pins it to a leather choker, wearing it as a gorget.) It will not rust or melt under any circumstances, and resists breaking or crushing (receiving a +5 bonus on all item saving throws). The wearer of the *Eye of Angalar* can (at a cost of 1 hit point, which can be regained through normal rest or magical healing) remain alert and awake—and immune to *sleep* spells—for forty-eight hours from the moment this power being activated.



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The *eye* also stores three spells, each of which can be cast twice per day, functions as if cast by an 18th-level mage, and returns by itself 24 hours after being activated (not 24 hours from ceasing to function). The effects of these spells can be ended instantly by the will of the wearer before normal expiration.

The spells are *infravision*, *remove curse* (its reversed form, *bestow curse*, is not included in the powers of the *eye*), and *wizard eye*.

Angalar was a mage of the Vilhon Reach region who made a fortune crafting and selling small but useful magical items circa 860–880 DR. The *eye* is one of his most powerful and rarest items.

Girdle of Fire

XP Value: 3,500 **GP Value:** 17,500

This broad, hardened leather belt typically covers a wearer's entire midriff and laces up the front between two flared ends of hardened leather sewn in layers to resemble crawling flames, with points projecting upward toward the wearer's sternum. Immune to all heat, flame, and blast damage, a *girdle of fire* bears enchantments that keep it from rotting or growing molds and make it resistant to cutting (add a +2 bonus to all applicable item saving throws). A *girdle of fire* protects its wearer against fires, and also stores four spells for the wearer's use.

The wearer of a *girdle of fire* and all of his clothing and carried items are rendered totally immune to all effects of his own fire magic (if grappled by foes, Talatha could center a *fireball* on herself and stand

unscathed while her foes burned), and to all normal fires (such as flaming oil and bonfires), and gains a +4 bonus to all saving throws against other magical fires.

The *girdle* protects its wearer against exceptionally hot or damaging fires (such as *fireballs*, *flame strikes*, the intersection zones of the bursting spheres of a *meteor swarm*, and red dragon breath) by reducing the damage these deal by -2 points per die of damage (to a minimum of 1 point per die).

The spells stored in the *girdle* can each be cast once per day, function as if cast by a 20th-level mage, and return by themselves 24 hours after being activated. They are activated by the silent will of the bearer, who need not be able to wield magic. The bearer is mentally made aware of these powers upon donning and lacing up the *girdle* (along with a few vivid but fleeting images of former wearers of the *girdle* using it, amid flames). The spells are *flaming sphere*, *fireball*, *delayed blast fireball*, and *fly*. The latter spell lasts for only 6 rounds, affecting the *girdle*-wearer only, and while the user is aloft, he trails an illusory but quite bright (cannot ignite anything, but could light up a castle ward, city street, or cavern hitherto shrouded in darkness) plume of flames sometimes called a "firtail."

Combat/Tactics: Talatha remains calm and clear-headed in battle, never freezing in surprise or confusion. She reacts instantly to any perceived threat and is swiftly learning to be ever vigilant, using her perception of flows within the Weave to be aware of beings employing magical disguises to approach her. The former "Shadow Sorceress of Innarolith" retains her nature of preferring to avoid fights, slipping away when she can. Not out of fear does she do this, but simply because she regards magical battles as a dangerous waste of her time, and hence they should be shunned.

This has left her capable in a fight, but not overly experienced in nasty tactics or methods of subduing or capturing foes. She tends to slay persistent foes, or more often fight off the initial attack and then flee.

Since becoming Magister, Talatha has ceased to regularly carry *invisibility* spells, but if she's bearing any scrolls when encountered, one of them will hold that spell, and she'll use it when possible to avoid a fight, often casting *ESP* thereafter to learn all she can about the beings menacing her while she lurks nearby.

Her new powers have given Talatha the confidence to face foes she would formerly have fled from. Whenever possible, she confronts monsters in an enclosed or restricted area, and casts *flaming sphere* at them (from her mind, not her *girdle*), following up with other damaging spells if need be. Against groups of foes, she employs *chain lightning* if in a large area, or a *fireball* (relying on her *girdle* to protect her) in an enclosed area.



In either case, her follow-up spell is likely to be a *delayed blast fireball* close behind her foes if an opponent is not charging her. Opponents she knows to be wizards get an *Evard's black tentacles* to keep them constrained unless this is impossible due to their location or nature, and then get fed *color spray*, *magic missile*, and more damaging spells such as *ice storm* and *cone of cold* only if need be.

Azuth has shown Talatha a crumbling ruin near Starmantle that can be used as a trap to weaken pursuing foes. It is a ruined castle, once known as Castle Endreth after the long-dead warrior who built it (and for purposes of *teleportation*, it is now considered "very familiar" to Talatha). The wilderness has entirely reclaimed the tiny farming village it once protected, save for a few stunted apple trees.

Castle Endreth is a roofless heap of collapsed stone walls, but it does sport extensive, empty, and very wet cellars reached by a long, descending hallway. That hall is cloaked by the failing remnants of ancient warding spells that still have the power to: act as a series of *shield* spells against all nonliving, nonorganic items not directly attached or held by a living creature; act as a *spell reflection* to all *lightning bolts* and related spells, such as *chain lightning*; and act as a series of *reverse gravity* "upfall" pit traps to anyone not mentally thinking the correct password as he or she proceeds along the passage. The passage ceiling is only 20 feet high, and the *reverse gravity* magic repeats itself instantly, so each trap causes a victim to rise and smash into the ceiling for 2d6 damage, fall back down to the floor for 2d6 damage, rebound to the ceiling for another 2d6 damage, and then be held there for 1 round before falling back to the passage floor for 2d6 additional damage. The trap then will not function again until 1 round has passed, whereupon it will activate if a victim is still within its 20-foot-long area of effect, or new victims have entered the area. If Talatha is sufficiently angry at a pursuer, she may turn and blast them with *magic missiles* while they're falling up and down, with an item she was shown by Azuth, and which Talatha has placed right where it can be found (only by her) for use in such situations.

Partway down the passage, one of the irregular blocks of stone that the walls are composed of can be pulled outward a few inches to reveal a storage niche hollowed out of the block—a space just large enough to contain a "secret weapon" left behind by a long-dead Magister: a *stone of magic missiles*.

Stone of Magic Missiles

XP Value: 1,000 **GP Value:** 5,000

This oval, featureless white stone looks like a giant hen's egg; it will entirely fill a large human palm. From

time to time, faint, sparkling motes of light coalesce out of the air to gather on its surface, but these wink out again before the stone glows brightly.

Any sentient creature who grasps such a stone with its bare flesh is instantly aware that it emits harmful bolts of magic, and that it can by silent act of will unleash up to four such bolts per round.

Each bolt is a *magic missile*, dealing 1d4+1 points of damage and streaking unerringly to strike a target seen by the holder of the stone as the *missile* is unleashed. Priests and wizards can send *missiles* to strike simultaneously at (up to four) different targets during a round. Creatures not used to wielding magic can hurl *missiles* at only a single target per round.

A *stone of magic missiles* operates for up to 4 rounds at a time and can be used up to three times each day with other effects. If called on more than three times in a day, a fourth use (in which the *stone* does function as above) causes it to be inactive for 2d12 days.

Nothing is kept in the castle's cellars except a chest containing six sealed silvered-steel vials and one red-painted steel vial, as well as a single silver vial, all of which are submerged in the deepest, dirtiest pool of water (the water is opaque due to sediment). Each silvered-steel vial is a *potion of extra-healing*. The red one is an *elixir of health*. The silver vial is a *potion of vitality*. From time to time the ruins are infested by monsters such as perytons, kobolds, or trolls, but weavespinners (see the "Mystra's Other Servants" chapter of this book) have orders to scour out the ruin regularly.

Allies/Companions: Talatha dwelt alone before she became Magister and now travels alone. The being she most often has contact with is Azuth. In her former life, she was intimate with a wandering bard, Boroland Nevilard, who passed through Innarilith once a season on his way between the Border Kingdoms and the Vilhon Reach. He never spent more than a few days at a time, and Talatha would like to see him again—but she also came to mistrust him slightly in recent years, and wants to use her powers as Magister to spy on his doings before she reveals herself to him again. (Mistrust does not mean unfaithfulness to her. Talatha has never expected that. Rather, she has begun to suspect that he gathers and sells information—about her and everyone else he sees in his travels—to wizards in the Vilhon who could quite well be Zhentarim or belong to some other evil cabal or organization.) She also has no intentions of admitting to Boroland that she is the Talatha who is now Magister.

Long ago, Talatha was rescued from the fire and fury of a pirate raid on Yallasch—wherein she suspects the parents she barely remembers perished—by one of the pirates, a roaring bully of a man named Mirt, who took



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her along the Lake of Steam in his ship and deposited her (along with twice her weight in gems, to pay for her upbringing) with the old, crippled wizard Onlagar Burnwood, who raised her as his daughter and apprentice. She has never forgotten Mirt's blustering merriment, his jokes and pranks, and his utter fearlessness, and often wonders what became of him. He must be dead or truly ancient by now, she judges—but she would like to see what became of him, if she can trace him. So far, by utter mischance, she just has not heard of Mirt of Waterdeep (who is detailed in *Heroes' Lorebook*, TSR #09525).

Foes/Enemies: Now that she is Magister, almost every wizard of Faerûn (save those who are Chosen) is Talatha's likely foe, just as almost every priest of Mystra is her likely ally, but the Shadow Sorceress of Innarlith did acquire three specific enemies in her former life. The most serious is Indolrere Moravan, a mage of the Zhentarim, present fate and whereabouts unknown. She helped Onlagar defeat him and chase him away from their ramshackle home, but has reason to believe that he has magically spied upon her several times since.

The most annoying (and, in Innarlith, ever present) is Saerla Thimroon, the local "sage and sorceress" of Innarlith, who sells information, tells fortunes, casts minor spells in elaborate charlatany and who grew to hate and fear Talatha as someone younger, prettier, and far more magically powerful who could expose her. She knows a great deal about Talatha's likes, dislikes, skills, and habits—and would leap to sell such information to anyone who asked her.

The third is Mlanduvver Tassio, a traveling merchant who tried to seize items from Onlagar's house after he learned the old wizard was dead and who fled, afire and furious, after he stole into the house at night, not knowing that Talatha still lived in the falling-down place, and tried to move aside the very bed she was sleeping on. Frightened out of her wits, she hurled deadly spells in all directions at Mlanduvver and his men—and has since learned that the merchant has hired some magelings and gathered some magical items, to use against her on his next visit to Innarlith.

All of these foes will be but memories if Talatha never returns to Innarlith, and not going near former haunts and one's home is of course the most prudent practice for any Magister, given the number of wizards who can trace a mage's past and lay traps or set spies to watch and wait for any return. However, such a wrenching dislocation from one's former life is a hard lesson for any Magister to learn—and Talatha neither has learned it yet, nor wants to.

Talatha's nascent foes will certainly come from the ranks of the Brotherhood of the Arcane, the Zhentarim,

and the Red Wizards of Thay, all of whose ranks include mages ruled by ambition and entranced by the speed of their own personal rises in power. They can scarcely believe that they could lose any duel fought on their terms, with all the tricks they could devise installed and ready. They can only learn differently one way—the hard way.

Appearance: Talatha is a slimly built woman of average height. She has ash-blonde hair, startlingly black brows, and smoke-gray eyes. Her movements are silent and graceful (she is an accomplished dancer). Her elegant movements draw male eyes, but has led more than one observer to dismiss her as "another lass whose head is full of windblown fluff." Talatha wears her hair shoulder-length and loose, gathering it back into a tail with a leather sleeve or snap-bracer when she's cooking or crafting magic. She likes to wear sideslit gowns that bare her legs when she moves (she hates to feel constricted or too warm) and cares little about her appearance.

Personality: Talatha takes pleasure in simple things—dancing and seeing the beauty of the lands, enjoying spells deftly cast and applied, and the splendor of Mystra's power when it's revealed to her. She likes to reason things through, is seldom fearful or grumpy, and though she feels a trifle lonely, sees no reason to wed or even acquire any close friends. She really agreed to be Magister so she could see more of the world than Innarlith offered and get her hands on materials not found locally, so as to further her own Art. Creating new spells, potions, spell inks, unguents that bear enchantments, and the like are her delight and what she's becoming very good at. She loves creativity, new ideas, and deft performance in all things. She is also looking forward to learning about the lives of all sorts of folk in Faerûn by adopting magical disguises for a day or an evening, to mingle among them. What's it really like to be a tavern dancer? An actor? A coachman? How do heralds learn all the lineages and blazons? What is this spelljamming she found mentioned in a note left behind by a long-dead Magister, and how could it have ever been used to "dance above the seas with dragons at play"? Talatha wants to know, and see, and feel . . . and live.

Locales Frequented: Formerly tied to Innarlith and still drawn there, Talatha has taken care to travel even more than Azuth has bade her and has begun to build a mental map of the Sword Coast lands south of Waterdeep, with side forays into Cormyr and the Vilhon. She has yet to settle into Nouméa's tireless pace of handing out magic here and helping farmfolk with a spell there,



but she has started to fall in love with farms, hedgerows, back lanes, and overgrown ruins (wherever the noise, officiousness, and crowding of large cities are absent). She is especially attracted to several places in Faerûn: the Unicorn Run and the farms between it and Secomber; the remote barony of Hawkhill in northeasternmost Amn; and Deepingdale in the Dragonreach lands. She likes to bathe in a certain tiny waterfall that carries a spring down the eastern face of one of the Thunder Peaks (ultimately to drain into Lake Sember), but is uncomfortable in the vicinity of Sembia, the Dales, and anywhere that close to the longtime stronghold of the Zhentarim.

History: The younger daughter of Ghendor and Irdiira Vaerovree of Yallasch (Talatha never knew what became of her bossy older sister, Terivelle, who disappeared hours before the pirates came raiding), Talatha caught the eye of one of the pirate captains, Mirt (a far more lawless man in those days), who bore her to Innarlith among his booty, giving her into the care of the crippled mage Onlagar Burnwood along with much wealth. Onlagar had once been Mirt's comrade, and the gems were both payment for Talatha's upbringing (Mirt knew Onlagar was both desperately lonely for a family of any sort and wanted to pass on his learning to an apprentice), and to settle an old debt: Onlagar's share of some earlier adventuring booty.

Onlagar was a testy but caring master and protective father, and once he saw that Talatha had not just an aptitude for magic but wits every bit the equal of his, he delighted in debating with her as an equal, and telling her as much as he could recall of the truths of life in the Realms. Where other old men told tall tales, he recounted the whys of wars, and where cooking-herbs grow, and how to craft spells, building from a known effect and a desired result to something new that could be experimented with.

Talatha grew to love and respect Onlagar, and because she served as his errand-runner and "hands to reach out for things hidden in the wild," she never grew restless while he lived. She learned to flit about, as unseen as possible, and she came to realize that wizards—and young girls living with twisted old men who'd been adventurers—were feared and sneered at in the streets of Innarlith. So she stole among the Innarym unseen, at night, using spells to silence the barking dogs, and plucked herbs or tapped on certain doors with the coins in her hand, to do business in the darkness.

When Onlagar died of a wasting disease she did not know how to fight, Talatha buried him herself and then sat wondering what to do. Something within her wanted to see the wider Realms, and something in her dared not





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leave the falling-down house that was home . . . or at least dared not forge forth across Faerûn until she had mastered more magic.

She became the Shadow Sorceress, hiding herself in darkness and invisibility when folk came seeking her—or poking around the increasingly ruined house. Her sole entertainments were Boroland Nevilard's visits (which began when he mistook her home for an uninhabited ruin where he could sleep for free, and fascinated her by disrobing and plunging into her rainwater-filled, ready bath to wash away the filth of the road, leaving himself vulnerable enough that she dared to approach) and dancing alone in the ruins, among a ring of floating mirrors held up by her magic, whilst she conjured music with other spells, and—pushing herself tremblingly to control multiple spells (cast at different times, but surviving alongside each other) at once—tried to animate broken chairs, cloakstands, and the like into whirling around in the dance with her.

It is likely one of the Chosen saw her, or more probably chanced to scry her from afar, when she was doing this, and showed her to Azuth. It is certain that he became aware of her at some point, and began to subtly and covertly test her, by giving her opportunities to work with more magic (things she assumed were hitherto hidden magics of Onlagar, but were actually placed there by weavespinners), and by putting ideas of how to use magic into her dreams, to see what she did with them. The ability to control multiple magics is rare in even the greatest mages. Azuth has had it from birth and is always fascinated to find it in others. From that point on, Talatha was one of the score or so mortals he keeps close watch on at all times, his roster of up-and-coming shapers of magic for the future.

She was one of perhaps a dozen he could have

offered the office of Magister to, but she was the most intriguing to him, and both he and Mystra had tasted enough of arrogant and graspingly ambitious young male wizards. Nouméa's nurturing had been a welcome change, and Azuth is looking forward to seeing what a green but more spirited lady mage does with the office. Seeing men blast each other with spells, the victors sneering and capering in their cruelty, only to fall to the next swift young male spellhurler, is something Azuth and Mystra have seen much. Let Talatha be something different . . .

And perhaps, just perhaps, he and Mystra work to protect and defend this Magister, too, so that her inevitable fall will come later rather than sooner.

Motivations/Goals: Talatha wants to be a good Magister and to do something that she will be remembered fondly for. She delights in the beauty of magic for its own sake and wants to craft many new and useful spells. She also has a wild dream of confronting the most evil mages of the Zhentarim, and rulers she deems cruel, and calmly smashing them with spells that topple their very towers down around the ears, while she stands unscathed in the heart of the very worst magic they can hurl. She is wise enough to know that this is foolish fantasy, not something she should ever dare to try, no matter how mighty she becomes. She'd also like to ride a friendly dragon someday, hurtling across Faerûn as fast as it can fly, have a chance to examine or talk with a beholder without having to fight it, and find—somewhere, somehow—a mate with whom to share her love of magic . . . but a mate she can trust not to try to slay her or betray her. Perhaps winning many friends among the common folk all over the backlands of Faerûn will make her feel just as loved and wanted.



Any book about an office won or lost by spell mastery, in service to the goddess of magic, could bulge with spells—world-shaking magic, deft variants of familiar spells, and strange, spectacular effects alike. Any tome that dared to claim definitive treatment of the spells used by all Magisters—even if such a thing were possible through divine aid—would have to fill rooms full of bookshelves, not rest inside a single pair of covers. Wherefore this book contains but a small selection of the odd and unusual.

To what is here can be added all of the spells contained in *The Seven Sisters* sourcebook that are not specifically labeled as restricted to one Sister or another—and their apprentices could well have shared a few of those.

Every Magister has come to the office with considerable power in the Art but widely varying specifics of mastery. Some Magisters have been able to draw on magical storehouses left behind by their predecessors, while others have had to go it alone, building their spell rosters from whatever they brought to the office of the Magister.

Much Magisterial magic is lost forever, and many more are hidden for now. Even some of the spells detailed in this chapter are not available to current Magisters but may soon turn up in the hands of daring adventurers who happen to explore the right ruin or tomb. Save for such intrepid individuals, and those who can hire or coerce adventurers to work for them (notably the zulkirs of Thay, the leaders of the Zentarim, and many rulers), no one but a Magister should have access to the spells detailed herein. There are a few exceptions, such as *spelltouch* and *spell trigger*. Spells suitable to be exceptions should be obvious upon examination—but even they should be relatively rare and difficult to obtain.

Mystra and Azuth make certain spells available to Magisters only as and when they deem it necessary. *Time conduit* (detailed in the *Cormanthyr: Empire of the Elves* campaign expansion) is one such magic. Other spells remain banned.

Forbidden Spells

After the folly of Karsus (the Netherese archwizard who aspired to godhood, uncaring of the effects of his spell-driven ascendance, and succeeded in both disrupting the Weave and bringing about the passing of the goddess Mystryl), the newly ascended Mystra stripped mortals of the ability to handle specific 10th-level spells.

She did this by altering their enchantments to make them both inoperative and incomprehensible to the Netherese alive at the time (in other words, all of the recorded incantations could no longer “take hold of the Weave” at all, and hence the spells simply would not

work). Mystra also altered a few of the symbols and glyphs of these incantations to make them injurious to the minds of beings attempting to memorize them or read and tinker with them.

History incorrectly records this as changing humans to make the use of such magic beyond their grasp, or changing the nature of magic to make spells of greater than 9th level unintelligible to humans, because that is what the goddess wanted mortals to believe (to keep strivings after such forbidden spells to a minimum, and the waste of spellcasters’ lives and efforts small).

It is possible, in the Realms of today, to research True Dweomers and even new 9th-level spells to achieve specific, severely limited ends that resemble parts of what a 10th-level spell could achieve. It is also possible for mortal spellcasters alive today to use any written 10th-level magic they may find, with the following warnings:

- Attempts to cast such magic will always fail the first time.
- All castings will be failures if the caster has less than 18 Intelligence and 16 Wisdom, and is of less than 20th level.
- All castings result in unintended wild magic results if the caster does not have the assistance of a second spellcaster (of at least 18th level and 18 Intelligence) who uses another spell or spells to link his or her will, mind, and life energy to the principal caster, as an “anchor.” Minor (or deliberate) discord among casters prevents the effective use of a third or additional spellcasters joining the anchor to make the spell more likely to take precise effect.
- All casting attempts are very likely (85% chance) to result in a loss of one experience level on the part of all casters involved, and will always cause the loss of 2d6 hit points and 1d4 other memorized spells (if any) from each of them.
- All casting attempts attract the attention of both Mystra and Azuth. If they deem the casting to be for purely personal ends, or to have the death or destruction of a rival mage or magical items as their primary goal, or to be in support of any tyranny or oppressive authority (in other words, to work against the free and individualistic ongoing development of magic use across Faerûn), they will cause the end result to be *feeble-mindedness* of all the casters involved and the instant disappearance of the written spell.

Magisters who attempt to work any of these banned high magics will succeed perfectly (though Azuth and Mystra may intervene to counteract the effects within moments) but will lose the office of the Magister in the process. In other words, they will cease to be the



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Magister and will be thrust forthwith into Mystra's Choice (a fate also shared by any Magister who knowingly tries to harm Azuth or Mystra directly, as opposed to merely trying to thwart their acts or block magic they hurl, which earns the Magister a debate with the gods while being mind-read). To a mortal observer, it will seem as if they "cast the forbidden and died for it."

One past Magister tried to use a 10th-level spell to open a great gulf in the earth and swallow up a city whose inhabitants he deemed evil and dangerous—because they were Halruaans who refused to accept his guidance as to what magic they should develop, and which ones they should leave off using, and stated their intent to go right on using magic to do whatever they desired it to do. The earth cracked, many buildings shattered or were toppled, folk died—and Azuth and Mystra manifested in anger to halt the cataclysm, restoring the rent in the soil and fusing the shattered buildings into stability once more. They also left the deaths and the fallen rubble, and made the entire city a wild magic area whose glows and spontaneous effects left it abandoned for years . . . until a later Magister began the long process of wiping the chaos of Art away.

The information related in this section is largely secret, but the points about the possibility of researching powerful magic, and the restrictions on the casting of found 10th-level spells, will be slowly and partially shared (through visions sent by Mystra) with any player character who prays to Azuth, Mystra, Oghma, or Savras for answers or guidance on this topic—or by high-ranking clergy of Azuth, Mystra, or Savras who are directly asked about such things by any mage (such as Mystra's commandment).

Mantles

Variant forms of this spell have existed on Toril since fabled Imaskar. All Netherese archwizards developed their own, and at the height of Netheril, there were at least a dozen versions in common use among lesser Netherese mages. Unlike similar mantles developed by the elves of Cormanthyr and seen by many humans who visited Myth Drannor, Netherese mantles are not centered on a gem. (For more on Cormanthan mantles, refer to the second *DRAGON® Magazine Annual*.)

All *mantles* are lasting protective fields centered on, and moving with, a single caster. The base spell is always at least 6th level, and the costs of maintaining such a mantle are the loss of 1 hit point (which can be regained by a day of rest, or by magical means) at the time of casting and every 24 hours thereafter, and the "drinking" of a random spell (not chosen by the caster,

but "taken" by the *mantle*) of any level from the caster's mind, 1 turn after the *mantle* is raised and every 24 hours thereafter.

If either hit points or memorized spells are unavailable to a "hungry" *mantle*, it collapses immediately, ending its protection. The caster can always choose to end a *mantle* instantly at any time, by silent act of will, but once ended, it is gone. He may not raise a lowered *mantle* again except by casting another *mantle* spell.

Whenever a *mantle* is used for three consecutive days, there is a 2% chance that its third hit-point drain will be a permanent loss to the caster. This chance is cumulative, increasing by an additional 2% daily, if the *mantle* is retained (4% on the fourth day, 6% on the fifth day, and so on).

A second *mantle* spell can be "hung" inside an operating *mantle* (that is, cast with an incantation that specifically holds it in obeisance so long as the first *mantle* persists), ready to take effect if the first fails. There is always a single unprotected round while a hung *mantle* awakens to take the place of a collapsing one. (Such an incantation is almost always crafted so that the casting of a *dispel magic* on the *mantle*-caster will have no effect on a hung *mantle* if the primary *mantle* remains up, but will cause the hung *mantle* to come into being if it does not. The *dispel magic* will never destroy the hung *mantle*.)

No more than two *mantle* spells can be hung inside a *mantle*. Adding another *mantle* magic will cause all four to collapse and be lost, with a 44% chance of a wild magic effect occurring. This will always involve a cloud of chaotic, vividly hued glows in the air, usually surrounded by many small, glittering motes of light, out of which erupt strange magical effects for a round or two, before everything fades away. To determine what magical effects manifest, either consult the Wild Magic Surge table in the *Tome of Magic*, or choose a *Player's Handbook* wizard spell at random and launch multiples of it at all or most (determine randomly) beings near where the *mantles* were.

Through the grace of Mystra, Chosen and Magisters of Mystra who employ *mantle* spells do so without suffering the loss of either hit points or memorized spells.

Most Magisters employ their own variant of a Netherese *mantle* that almost all Magisters have had access to. Since this base spell was not created by or for a Magister, it exhibits some protections unnecessary for anyone bearing the usual Magisterial powers and immunities. Many recent Magisters, through lack of time or perhaps lack of confidence, have not modified this *mantle* at all. One swore that his *mantle* whispered things to him occasionally, and thus must be haunted.



Sixth-level Spell

Mantle (Wiz 6; Abjuration, Alteration, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	Caster
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 rounds
Saving Throw:	None

This spell brings into being an aura, visible only as a momentary shimmering in the air, around the caster. The material components are a dried, empty cocoon casing (from any insect), a drop of the caster's blood, and nine gems or mineral crystals of any sizes and substances, each of which must have been changed in some way by a spell of a different level (one affected by a 1st-level spell, one by a 2nd-level spell, and so on).

The *mantle* moves with the caster, persisting about all parts of his or her body (even if some become separated from the main body) regardless of wakefulness or slumber, consciousness or damage or even feeble-mindedness, and lasts until the caster either dies or wills the *mantle* to collapse. It extends to cover all items the caster wears or directly carries, but does remain with items that are dropped or left behind. A *mantle* drinks 1 hit point from the caster when its casting is complete, and another point every 24 hours thereafter, so long as the

mantle is maintained. This drain "pays for" the day until the next draining, but is not regained if the caster wills the *mantle* out of existence soon after the draining takes place. A *mantle* can withstand nine or more attempts to magically alter, smash, or dispel it. Consider each *mantle* to have 9 hit points of its own, and subtract 1 whenever it faces such challenges. It can also gain hit points, as seen hereafter. Other spells do a *mantle* no harm, whether passing into or out of it.

A *mantle* increases in power and price as its caster gains levels. The base *mantle*, the 6th-level spell, confers the following protections upon its caster:

- The ability to stand against *repulsion*, to control temperature within the *mantle* by 10 plus 1d12 degrees either way from the temperature around the *mantle*, and to quell winds within or acting upon the *mantle*, including *gusts of wind*.
- *Protection from normal missiles*.
- *Feather fall*.
- A bonus of +1 on all saving throws vs. spell.
- An additional, cumulative +1 bonus on saving throws vs. Enchantment/Charm and Illusion/Phantom spells, with saving throws allowed every round (the first successful one breaks the hostile magic).
- The ability to negate (acquire utter immunity to) one specific spell the *mantle*-wearer can already cast.



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Each contact of this spell's effect on the *mantle* strengthens it, giving it 1 additional hit point against magical attempts to *dispel*, alter, or shatter it. Spells can be of any level, so long as it is usable by the caster of the *mantle*.

- The ability to boost (unleash at full possible effects) one specific spell of any level, when it is cast by the *mantle*-wearer.

A 12th-level wizard can cast the base *mantle* spell. For every level above that, casters gain additional *mantle* powers. There are also additional costs to such greater *mantles*. Every time a wizard rising in power gains access to a new level of spells, memorizing a *mantle* requires a spell slot at the next level (in other words, a wizard able to use 7th-, 8th-, and 9th-level spells who memorizes a *mantle* loses slots at each of these levels, as well as 6th. Failure to leave these empty before the *mantle* casting results in a *mantle* that has only the base powers of the 6th-level spell, and attempts to fill them after the *mantle* has been cast causes its loss, whether operating or hung. Moreover, *mantles* for wizards of 15th level and above require 3 rounds of casting time. The extra rounds are used to choose and "set" the spells to be negated or boosted. Note that this makes a single *mantle* of the level described simultaneously a 6th-, 7th-, 8th-, and 9th-level spell. Whenever other magical activity forces the *mantle*-caster to lose a (random) memorized spell, the *mantle* will be the very last to be lost, thanks to the stability these multiple levels give its memorization.

Many wizards have tried to alter the incantation of a *mantle* spell to allow them to cast an intermediate *mantle*—that is, one not of the maximum power for their experience level (and hence not needing to occupy upper level spell slots), but greater in power than the base *mantle*. All of these attempts have failed. One either gets everything or the base version. It should be noted that all the spells to be negated and boosted by the *mantle* must be specified during casting and cannot be changed thereafter. Failure to specify each and every one of them results in a base *mantle*—and if the frustrated wizard then tries to fill the upper spell slots that the *mantle* "is not using," the *mantle* collapses and is lost.

The additional *mantle* powers are described hereafter. Unless otherwise specified, they are identical to wizard spells of the same name, functioning as if cast by a mage of the level of the *mantle*-caster. Only one active *mantle* power (offensive or translocational spell effect) can operate at a time (though cumulative, related active powers that build from level to level are considered a single active power for this purpose), but protective and caster-altering features can function simultaneously with each other and with an awakened active power.

13th-level caster:

- *Levitate* (caster and *mantle*, together).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.

14th-level caster:

- *Telekinesis*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- *Mantle* can be made to glow with *faerie fire* (hue and intensity of the caster's choice; cannot be made blinding).

15th-level caster:

- An additional, cumulative bonus of +1 on all saving throws versus spells.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.

16th-level caster:

- *Fly* (caster and *mantle*, together).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.

17th-level caster:

- *Dimension door* (caster and *mantle*, together).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- *Mantle* burns undead it touches for 1d4 hit points of damage per contact, or 1d4+1 hp damage per round of continuous contact.

18th-level caster:

- *Teleport* (caster and *mantle*, together).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- *Mantle* expands to cover another being (plus his or her worn or carried items) touching the caster, only for so long as the being remains touching the caster and the caster desires the protection to extend to him or her.



19th-level caster:

- *Teleport without error* (caster and *mantle*, together).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- Caster can hang one spell of 5th level or less in the *mantle*, by casting it into the *mantle*. Its slot is freed up to allow the caster to memorize another spell, and the hung spell effect, which is invisible but can be felt as a roiling tension in the air, can be called forth at any time thereafter by the caster's will, or can be set to "go off" with conditions akin to those that govern the operation of a *magic mouth* spell. hung spell details given hereafter are not cumulative (different level casters will have different hung spell capabilities), but do not include other *mantle* spells, which can be hung inside any *mantle*, regardless of level or other *mantle* capabilities, as extra hung magic not counted here.

20th-level caster:

- *Shapechange* (caster only, *mantle* alters to fit, but its operation is unchanged).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- *Mantle* expands to cover a second being (plus his or her worn or carried items) touching the caster, only for so long as he or she remains touching the caster and the caster desires the protection to extend to him or her. Two beings is the maximum that any known *mantle* spell can protect, besides its caster.

21st-level caster:

- Caster can voluntarily transfer the *mantle* to another willing, touched being (who is not made a spellcaster by wearing the spell if he or she is not to begin with, but is empowered to unleash any existing hung spells just as if he or she were the casting mage).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- Caster can hang a second spell of 5th level or less in the *mantle*, by casting it into the *mantle*. Its slot is freed up to allow the caster to memorize another spell, and the hung spell effect, which is invisible but can be felt as a roiling tension in the air, can be called forth at any time thereafter by the caster's will, or can be set to go off with conditions akin to those that govern the operation of a *magic mouth* spell.

- *Mantle* can dampen or block sounds passing through it, to give the caster *silence* or make his activities unheard.

22nd-level caster:

- Caster can voluntarily transfer the *mantle* to up to three willing, touched beings in the same round. Each of these beings receives only the protections of a base 6th-level *mantle* spell (all hung spells, if any, vanish, and additional properties of the parent *mantle* are lost).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- *Mantle*-wearer can voluntarily sacrifice a hung or memorized spell, which vanishes unseen and harmlessly, to heal himself, one spell level yielding 1d4 hit points (thus, a *fireball* yields up 3d4 hit points).

23rd-level caster:

- *Wraithform* (caster only; can be adopted and relinquished repeatedly, and does not affect ongoing operation of *mantle*).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- Caster can hang a single spell of 6th level or less (in addition to any 5th-level spells hung) in the *mantle*, by casting it into the *mantle*. Its slot is freed up to allow the caster to memorize another spell, and the hung spell effect, which is invisible but can be felt as a roiling tension in the air, can be called forth at any time thereafter by the caster's will, or can be set to go off with conditions akin to those that govern the operation of a *magic mouth* spell. A *contingency* spell can never be hung.

24th-level caster:

- *Spell reflection* (automatic, operates against all spells of a particular school or sphere).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the *mantle*.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the *mantle*.
- Caster can hang a second spell of 6th level or less (in addition to any 5th-level spells hung) in the *mantle*, by casting it into the *mantle*. Its slot is freed up to allow the caster to memorize another spell, and the hung spell effect, which is invisible but can be felt as a roiling tension in the air, can be called forth at any time thereafter by the caster's will, or can be set to go off with conditions akin to those that govern the operation of a *magic mouth* spell.



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25th-level caster:

- Mantle becomes able to cleave (and dispel instantly) walls of force and minor globes of invulnerability upon contact, whilst itself remaining unharmed.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the mantle.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the mantle.
- Caster can hang a spell of 7th level or less (in addition to any 5th- and 6th-level spells hung) in the mantle, by casting it into the mantle. Its slot is freed up to allow the caster to memorize another spell, and the hung spell effect, which is invisible but can be felt as a roiling tension in the air, can be called forth at any time thereafter by the caster's will, or can be set to go off with conditions akin to those that govern the operation of a *magic mouth* spell.

26th-level caster:

- In addition to the cleaving powers granted to 25th-level casters, the mantle becomes able to cleave (and dispel instantly) globes of invulnerability and antimagic shells upon contact, whilst itself remaining unharmed.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the mantle.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the mantle.
- Caster can hang a second spell of 7th level or less (in addition to any 5th- and 6th-level spells hung) in the mantle, by casting it into the mantle. Its slot is freed up to allow the caster to memorize another spell, and the hung spell effect, which is invisible but can be felt as a roiling tension in the air, can be called forth at any time thereafter by the caster's will, or can be set to go off with conditions akin to those that govern the operation of a *magic mouth* spell.

27th-level caster:

- In addition to the cleaving powers granted to lower-level casters, the mantle becomes able to cleave (and dispel instantly) prismatic walls and prismatic spheres upon contact, being itself destroyed in the process (but leaving the caster unharmed).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the mantle.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the mantle.

28th-level caster:

- Renders mantle-wearer immune to reverse gravity and limited wish spells.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the mantle.

- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the mantle.
- Caster can hang a spell of 8th level or less (in addition to any 5th-, 6th-, and 7th-level spells hung) in the mantle, by casting it into the mantle. Its slot is freed up to allow the caster to memorize another spell, and the hung spell effect, which is invisible but can be felt as a roiling tension in the air, can be called forth at any time thereafter by the caster's will, or can be set to go off with conditions akin to those that govern the operation of a *magic mouth* spell. Neither permanency nor wish spells can ever be hung.

29th-level caster:

- Renders mantle-wearer immune to imprisonment and time stop spells (left free to act if within the confines of the latter magic).
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the mantle.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the mantle.
- Caster can hang a second spell of 8th level or less (in addition to any 5th-, 6th-, and 7th-level spells hung) in the mantle, by casting it into the mantle. Its slot is freed up to allow the caster to memorize another spell, and the hung spell effect, which is invisible but can be felt as a roiling tension in the air, can be called forth at any time thereafter by the caster's will, or can be set to go off with conditions akin to those that govern the operation of a *magic mouth* spell. Two 8th-level spells are the maximum that can be hung inside any known mantle.

30th-level caster:

- Renders mantle-wearer immune to weird and wish spells.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be negated by the mantle.
- Caster chooses another specific spell to be boosted by the mantle.

This version of the mantle spell has no known augmentations beyond this point. Others (not available to any recent Magisters, and possibly to no mages alive today) are rumored to continue building in power.

If a mantle is taken down by its caster, or expires, it simply fades silently away, taking any and all hung spells with it unless they are other mantle spells, set to come into being in this very situation (if there are two, one awakens, and the other continue to wait). If a mantle with hung spells is destroyed, and some or all of these hung spells are not waiting replacement mantles, the mantle-wearer must make a successful Intelligence



check for each level of augmentation possessed by the dying *mantle* (for instance, a 16th-level wizard uses a *mantle* having four augmentations above the base spell, and thus must make four checks). If and only if all the checks are successful, the caster retains control over what happens to any hung spells. Otherwise, what occurs is chosen at random, regardless of the caster's wishes. Hung spells can never be controlled by any being other than their original caster.

A caster in control of hung spells can choose to have their raw energy heal himself or a touched recipient creature, each spell level conferring $1d4+1$ hit points. This process involves momentary pain (which may cause shuddering, grimaces, and even cries or groans), is usually visible as glowing motes of light gushing from the recipient's eyes, ears, nose, and mouth (senses and speech are unaffected), and allows the retention of any extra hit points (left over once the being is fully healed) for $2d12$ turns. Wisps of glowing light often issue from the eyes or nostrils of a being carrying extra hit points. Any harm taken by the being carrying the extra hit points during this time is taken from the extra hit points only until they are exhausted.

The caster may not divide this flow of raw energy between himself and another recipient, or between two or more touched recipients. One creature receives it all. If the caster touches an undead creature (successful attack roll required), the flow of raw energy deals the undead creature damage on the same $1d4+1$ hit point per spell level basis (with no saving throw to avoid or lessen). Note that intangible undead, such as a vampire in gaseous form, can be touched for the purposes of discharging raw spell energy in an attack. Elminster says this is the closest most mortal spellcasters ever get to wielding *spellfire*.

A caster in control can also choose one of three other fates for the dying hung spells. If the caster is not in control, choose one of these results randomly.

- The hung spells can dissipate harmlessly with the *mantle* (a visible swirling glow and crackling sound—both harmless—usually erupt briefly where this occurs).
- The hung spells power a wild magic surge (consult Table 2: Wild Surge Results in the *Tome of Magic*, or the much smaller array of choices offered for the flagon that was once the Magister Kataclath, in the chapter of this book titled "Mystra's Choice"), localized but spectacular in effects.
- The hung spells go off in random directions, being cast at targets or into areas on all sides of the dying *mantle*. They produce their usual spell effects.

More than one wizard has thought that there should be a way to channel the raw magical energy flow of dying hung spells (and of a collapsing *mantle*, for that matter) so as to recharge magical items, faltering wards, and other renewable spell effects—but no one has managed it yet, despite centuries of experimentation.

There have been cases of unintended revitalization of old, faltering magic (wards and other stationary effects, far more than portable magical items), but not a single instance of a process being worked out, and repeated successfully, for the energies released by a vanishing *mantle* recharging anything. Yet mages continue to puzzle over this one, because it seems to them that this is, or ought to be, possible. Elminster reports that he once, in "a tender moment," bluntly asked Mystra if it was possible, and she smiled and said, "Of course."

Baldrics

A wizard or wizards now lost to us in the passage of time, on some day when Netheril was young or even earlier, hit upon an alternative to the full-fledged *mantle*: a magical means of hanging spells cast at careful leisure in stasis, to be unleashed by their caster at some later time by silent act of will alone.

Thus, a lone wizard who was hurled down by an enemy, bound or chained, temporarily blinded, or simply unable to reach or find room to use material components, could use the spells he was capable of casting, without giving foes any warning.

A variety of such "ready storage" spells were in use early on in human mastery of magic on Faerûn, sages say. They could even be the chief reason wizards became persons of influence. No longer could others control when and how a mage cast his spells simply by confining him.

Some sages even believe that baldrics were not the poor mage's alternative to the *mantle*, but preceded those wondrous defenses, which were in fact developed from simpler baldrics. Whatever the truth as to its origins, the baldric (named, of course, after the warriors' harness that allows for the carrying of large weapons, or a variety of weapons, slung with or without scabbards) has come down to us in the form of one sturdy spell (though liches and mages taught from ancient grimoires may use quite different variants). That spell is *Belorigar's Baldric*.

Sixth-level Spell

Belorigar's Baldric (Wiz 6; Alteration, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 round
Saving Throw:	Special



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The casting of this spell requires as its material component a clear gemstone of any type and cut, so long as it is of at least 1,000 gold pieces in value. For success, it also requires the caster to successfully make three saving throws vs. spell. If any fail, the gem and the memorized spell are lost and wasted.

A successful *baldric* is an invisible something (mages are still in sharp disagreement as to exactly what) that moves with the caster and is considered to float just above his shoulders, but cannot be seen or otherwise detected, traced, affected by magical or physical barriers placed on or around him, or spells cast on him (such as *dispel magic* or more powerful magic-scouring effects, short of *Mordenkainen's disjunction*, which destroys the *baldric*, forcing it to spill its contents as intact and normal-effect castings pouring forth in random directions). The *baldric* has only one purpose: to store spells cast in the normal manner (but, by modification of the incantation, into it) by the *baldric* caster only, for later use, in the same way that a *mantle* spell can store hung spells for later activation.

A spell stored in a *baldric* is unleashed by the caster thinking of it and willing it to be unleashed at a specific target or spot. This act of will is silent, requires no spell components or even caster freedom, and can only be prevented by the caster trying to make a spell take effect outside of its range or possible area of effect, or by the

caster's mental incapacity (due to, for example, feeble-mindedness. Note that drunken, sleepy, or pain-wracked wizards vary in their ability to concentrate. A mage in dying agony may well be able to unleash stored spells through sheer hate-driven force of will). A prevented unleashing does not harm or waste a stored spell.

The duration of a *baldric* and the number of spells it can store at any one time are determined by the level of its caster. A *baldric* and its stored magic fade away tracelessly and are lost without effect if its caster dies. A *baldric* also ends the moment 1 day has passed for every experience level of its caster (at the time the *baldric* was created) from the time its casting was complete. In this case, any stored spells are lost without effect.

A *baldric* can be destroyed by a properly phrased *limited wish* or *wish* spell, and by the casting of a *Mordenkainen's disjunction* that takes the *baldric*-caster into its area of effect, or by an *imprisonment* spell cast upon the *baldric*-caster. Either of these latter two spells causes all stored, hung spells to be hurled forth from storage as castings having their normal effect. In the case of the *disjunction*, this unleashing is at random. In the case of the imprisonment, the caster can direct where and how all of the unleashed magic take effect (within their usual range and area of effect restrictions), though they all take effect at once (none of them can be delayed or saved for later use).



Otherwise, spells hung in or on a *baldric* can be unleashed at a rate of only one per round, and preclude normal spellcasting (though not wielding of magical items) during that round (at very high levels, this can change; see below). Spells hung in a *baldric* are gone from the caster's mind, and he can memorize new spells to replace them. The storage capacity of a *baldric* begins at two spells, rises to three when its caster reaches 14th level, becomes four when the caster is 16th level, five at 18th level, and six at 20th level. At 22nd level, the *baldric* capacity does not rise, but the caster gains the ability to unleash two spells from it in a single round (though not to activate a hung spell and cast a spell in the normal fashion). At 24th level, the *baldric* capacity reaches seven stored spells, its limit (attempts to go beyond this always result in collapse of the *baldric* in a wild magic surge that consumes all stored spells).

Combination Spells

In the endless struggle to cast more spells faster and harder than rival mages, many wizards (Magisters and lackspell hedge-wizards alike) have struck upon the idea of a casting that would cause two spell effects in succession, or at the same time. Many have conceived and pondered, but very few have succeeded through long and difficult experimentation. The Magister Dathchaunt was the first to create a working spell that unleashed two spell effects, one after another. *Dathchaunt's Deathbolt* causes a *fireball* effect followed by a *lightning bolt*.

It is important to remember that Dathchaunt's incantation cannot simply be strung between any two spells to join them: The exact method for successfully combining any two spells is a unique matter, and must be found by long and careful experimentation, trying all combinations of fragmentary incantations from the two spells to be joined. The end result is therefore a new spell, not two memorized spells linked by a memorized bridge spell.

Combination spells are always at least 3rd-level magic—but once above that threshold, are usually one level more than the combined levels of the two component spells. For instance, a double *fireball* (not something any mage is reported to have mastered yet, though many have tried) would probably be a 7th-level spell, as it combines two 3rd-level magics. In fact, no combination spell has yet successfully been crafted that unleashes two identical spells in immediate succession (the one spell that comes close to being an exception to this, *Filverel's Doorward*, is a variant of the most often attempted combination magic: a 3rd-level spell that launches two *magic missiles*). The late sage Haerivaertus of Athkatla once proposed that

such "echo" combination spells, wherein the two combined spells are identical, should be one level *less* than the combined levels of the two spells, not one more . . . but the *Doorward* does not follow this stricture. Nor does there seem any way, theoretical or accomplished, of combining spells higher than 4th level: Mystra shows no signs of being willing to grant 10th-level spells just to allow combinations of 5th-level magic.

It is also worth noting that Dathchaunt never managed to join three spells—and after he'd shattered a tower trying, Azuth appeared to him to tell him that he never would succeed in such a goal, and would do better to direct his talents and time elsewhere.

A later Magister successfully applied Dathchaunt's methods to the spells *magic missile* and *wizard lock*. Nerren's *Guardlock* seals a closed door—and unleashes a volley of *magic missiles* into the first being to touch it. The Magister Filverel later modified this by replacing the *wizard lock* with a second *magic missile*, so the door was no longer magically sealed, but instead fired *magic missiles* at the first two beings to touch it. *Filverel's Doorward* is popular among the relatively small circle of mages who know it.

Third-level Spell

Filverel's Doorward (Wiz 3; Abjuration, Evocation)

Range:	Touch
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	One door covering
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 round
Saving Throw:	None

This spell is cast on a door, shutter, or hatch (and can cover any number or combination of such hinged or removable coverings that guard admittance to the same opening). The *doorward* causes the recipient door to unleash a *magic missile* spell at the first two beings to touch it, or at the same being twice, if that being touches the door in different rounds and no other being touches it in between.

The *magic missiles* of each of the two spell effects erupt in numbers determined by the *doorward*-caster's level: three at 5th level, four at 7th level, and five at 9th level and greater. Like the usual *magic missile* spell, these enchanted flying weapons are blue-white bolts of force that unerringly follow and strike their target within the round of their appearance, each bolt dealing $1d4+1$ hit points of damage.

To cast this spell, a wizard must be familiar with (have previously cast) and have access to (for study) the *magic missile* spell. The material components of the *doorward*



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spell are a drop or three of the caster's saliva, and a pinch of dust that has previously settled on a magical potion, item, or spellbook, or on a surface bearing a magical symbol, glyph, or rune (a not yet triggered spell, not merely an inscription).

The *doorward* can be detected by magical means (the entire recipient door radiates faint magic), and can be removed without "going off" by application of a *dispel magic*. Beings protected against magic who pass through the door, spells and magically animated constructs used to open the door from afar, and nonliving creatures (including undead) who open the door will neither trigger nor exhaust the *doorward*. It will remain for an indefinite time (centuries if need be) until both of its *magic missiles* are discharged.

Fourth-level Spell

Nerren's Guardlock

(Wiz 4; Abjuration, Alteration, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	Caster
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 rounds
Saving Throw:	None

This combination magic, in a single casting that requires as its material components a strand of the caster's hair (or the hair of a blood relative) and a strand of spider web, applies a *wizard lock* to a closed door, chest, shutter, portal or hatch (or any number or combination of such hinged or removable coverings that guard admittance to the same opening) and links a *magic missile* spell to it.

Like the *wizard lock* spell, a *guardlock* can be freely passed, without triggering it, by its caster. The caster can also touch a single additional creature during casting and render it "invisible" to the *guardlock*, able to pass freely what the spell guards without triggering the magic.

All other beings encounter a locked covering to the opening they wish to enter or pass through, and can only proceed past it by breaking the door or other covering, casting a successful *dispel magic* or *knock* spell, or by being a mage having at least four experience levels more than the caster of the *guardlock*. (The *knock* spell or being a sufficiently powerful mage suspends the operation of the *guardlock* just for that caster or mage, rather than ending its protection.)

A *guardlock* fires a volley of *magic missiles* into the first being touching the door: either four bolts if the *guardlock*-caster is 7th or 8th level, or five bolts if the caster is 9th level or greater. These flying enchanted *missiles* are blue-white bolts of force that unerringly follow and strike their target within the round of their appearance, each

bolt dealing $1d4+1$ hit points of damage. A *guardlock* spell ends when its *wizard lock* is broken, regardless of how many *magic missile* volleys it has or has not emitted.

If any magic (including a *dispel magic* or a *knock* spell) are hurled at the *guardlocked* door or covering and fail to successfully shatter it or banish the *guardlock*, the spell drains their energy and uses it to immediately hurl an extra volley of *magic missiles* at the source of the attacking spell. This volley is numerically the same as the *guardlock* normally produces (regardless of the strength or nature of the attacking magic), and does not exhaust the usual first touch volley provided by the *guardlock*. If that volley has already been cast but the *guardlock* remains because its *wizard lock* has not been broken, absorption volleys still occur (even years after the *guardlock*'s own volley was sent forth).

A *guardlock* can only emit one *missile* volley per round, but if multiple spells strike the guarded door in the same round, it emits one volley for each spell that struck it in the rounds that follow (and if new spells strike it in those rounds, it will in turn save their responses for later rounds). In all cases, volleys are sent after the precise sources of the magic attacking the door, in order of the arrival of those attacks (resolve ties by determining randomly). *Magic missiles* sent at a source no longer on the same plane fades away harmlessly, but *missiles* sent at a source now merely out of view will seek out and strike that source. The breaking of its *wizard lock* normally ends a *guardlock* instantly, with its *magic missiles* wasted if unfired, but a backlog of absorption volleys will not be lost—instead, they will erupt all at once in a burst.

Seventh-level Spell

Dathchaunt's Deathbolt (Wiz 7; Evocation)

Range:	10 yds.+ 10 yds./level
Duration:	Instantaneous
Area of Effect:	20-foot radius
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	7
Saving Throw:	1/2

This spell causes a *fireball* (like the 3rd-level wizard spell of the same name) to burst, and then a *lightning bolt* to appear and race through the same area a moment later. The two effects of the *deathbolt* spell may not be used to target two different areas, and creatures affected by both fire and then electrical discharge must make separate saving throws against both (each, if successful, lessens damage to half for the effect being saved against, but does not alter the other effect). Creatures immune to, or protected against, either fire or electricity suffers damage from only the half of the spell they are vulnerable to. If protected against both, they will take



only 1 point of damage per level of the *deathbolt* caster due to the shock of the *fireball* blast followed by the lightning strike.

The *fireball* manifests as the usual streak of flame from the caster to a spot where a roaring burst of fire erupts, expanding to fill a 20-foot-radius sphere and dealing fiery damage to all items and creatures within, or in contact with, that area. Striking something solid before reaching the intended spot causes the *fireball* to burst right there—moving both the fireburst and the *lightning bolt* to this new, closer location. (The caster of a *deathbolt* can be harmed by either or both parts of his own spell.) The roiling flames deal 10d6 hit points of damage, ignite all combustibles, and force saving throws vs. magical fire on all items not possessed by a being who successfully saves versus the *fireball*. Items worn or carried by beings whose fail their saves must be individually checked to see if they are melted or immolated.

The *lightning bolt* begins on the caster's side of the *fireball* sphere and races into the snarling flames, which immediately tear at the racing electricity and split it into many tiny bolts that stab throughout the sphere of flames. The usual straight bolt never occurs; instead the sphere of flames briefly becomes a sphere of racing lightning. This robs the electricity of much of its damage. It no longer forces saving throws on any items, and deals a maximum of 6d6 hp damage (creatures who save suffer 3d6).

Beings in or touching the spherical area of a *deathbolt* thus face 10d6 fire damage (5d6 if they successfully save vs. spell), and an additional 6d6 hp damage (3d6 if they successfully save vs. spell).

The material components of a *deathbolt* are a pinch (or larger piece) of saltpeter or phosphorous, a smooth piece of amber or crystal, and some ash from a tree scorched (or entirely burned down) by lightning.

Selected Magisterial Spells

Out of the vast and glittering array of spells wielded by the long succession of Magisters in Mystra's service, Azuth has made available, through Elminster, "an interesting handful"—and here they are.

It should be remembered that many of these spells exist in several variant forms, under various names, and may be found in widespread and unlikely places anywhere on Toril. Several Magisters confounded rivals and overly ambitious apprentices (and yet carried out Mystra's wishes about spreading magic) by disseminating partial versions of these spells.

First-Level Spells

Alter Digits (Wiz 1; Necromancy)

Range:	0
Duration:	1 round/level
Area of Effect:	Caster
Components:	V, S
Casting Time:	4
Saving Throw:	None

This spell affects all fingers and toes on any two extremities of the caster or a touched living spell recipient. If the intended recipient is unwilling, the spell is always wasted, without taking effect. An *alter digits* enables its caster to temporarily alter the size, hue, shape, and texture of the digits. Thus, they can appear to be scaled, of a different skin hue, or even fewer or greater in number (thus changing the caster's apparent race or gender), fingerprints can be altered, and reach can be extended (fingers can be made short and stubby, or up to 2 feet in length and as thin as a half inch in diameter). The actual strength of, and number of joints in, such digits is not altered by the spell.

Digits can be made to exude sticky sweat (to pick up keys or other small objects touched by the fingertips, for example) or slippery slime (to make grasping them difficult). The change in shape can, at the option of the Dungeon Master, improve the recipient's ability to catch or hold onto things and to climb walls.

An *alter digits* can be instantly ended at any time prior to spell expiry by the will of the caster (even if the spell recipient is in another location), restoring the digits to their former state.

Plungesoil (Wiz 1; Evocation)

Range:	Touch
Duration:	3 rounds
Area of Effect:	6-foot-deep shaft, 7 inches in diameter
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1
Saving Throw:	None

A *plungesoil* spell digs a cylindrical shaft 6 feet straight down into the earth, beneath the spot touched by the caster (either with his finger or a designated boot). The diameter of the shaft is the length of the caster's flattened hand. The magic melts a hole through buried stones and bedrock, if such intervene in the making of the hole.

The magic lifts the core of earth smoothly straight up into the air, to a height above the caster's head (if it strikes a ceiling or other immobile barrier on the way, the spell is broken, as described hereafter). The cylinder of earth, mud, sand, and/or stones hangs in shape there



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for a complete round, and then descends to fill the hole again, erasing all traces of digging and disturbance (dead leaves or windblown pine needles are restored to the surface, and so on, though the spot radiates faint magic for 22 turns thereafter). The spell packs its diggings down as firmly as necessary to get them all to fit back into the hole. If this is impossible due to objects being placed in the hole, the excess is carried away on a brief spell-plume of wind and scattered.

The caster can choose to let the spell run its course (peering into the hole during the round in which the diggings hang to look for things or put something into the hole), or choose to break the spell while the earth is out of the hole (in either the second or third round of the spell). This can be done in two ways: Either the earth is allowed to fall in a shower, scattering loosely everywhere within a 10-foot radius except straight down back into the hole (typically it soils items and beings within this area), or the caster can direct it to rush, in a cloud, in a specific direction. If used against an opponent, a successful attack roll (at THAC0 13, regardless of the caster's own THAC0) must be made to strike the opponent. If a strike is successful, the opponent suffers no direct damage, but is hampered and partially blinded for 1 round (unable to advance, cast spells, or launch accurate missile weapon attacks), and any fragile exposed items (such as glass) in the path of this cloud, including carried on the body of a being, must make saving throws vs. "fall."

In any case, the caster is free to work other magic during the second and third rounds of a *plungesoil* spell without harming its operation in any way.

Plungesoil spells are often used to find water, search for buried treasure, swiftly hide small treasures, or simply to dig latrine-holes. The spell will not function if cast on a bare stone surface or on earth covered with any depth of standing water, ice, or snow.

The material components of a *plungesoil* spell are a pinch of earth and a sliver of metal that has in the past been part of a shovel, or a tool used at least once to dig or move earth, mud, or sand.

Second-level Spells

Hand of Tentacles (Wiz 2; Alteration, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	9 rounds
Area of Effect:	One of caster's hands
Components:	V, M
Casting Time:	2
Saving Throw:	None

This spell temporarily creates a writhing forest of a dozen 3-foot-long, prehensile tentacles extending from the fingers of one of the caster's hands. These writhing digits can carry items, but have no greater strength than the caster normally possesses. The caster cannot feel any sensation in them (an item being carried must be observed to be properly picked up and later not dropped, as there is no sensation of touch), and thus feels no pain when they are damaged.

In like manner, the caster suffers no hit point damage when the tentacles are harmed; they can therefore be used to handle hazardous substances. If the tentacles collapse, corrosive acid, flesh-devouring or flesh-altering molds, and other harmful substances or processes are not transferred or conducted to the real fingers they stem from. While the tentacles exist, the wizard cannot successfully cast spells that have material or somatic components.

A hand of tentacles can be used to flail foes, try to smother or blind them, or grapple with them and their weapons. All of these activities require successful attack rolls on the part of the caster.

Tentacle flailing deals $1d12+12$ hit points of damage per round. There is no save against this damage, and a single attack roll governs all the tentacles, but foes protected by chain mail or better armor automatically suffer only half damage, rounding rolls down. Partial solid cover such as a large shield, door, or bony-plated monster skin will also qualify for half damage.

Smothering requires the wizard wielding the tentacles to strike a foe's face (or gills, or other air intake, which must be small or concentrated enough to be covered by the tentacles). If smothering is attempted, half flailing damage occurs, and the tentacle-wielding wizard and his foe both roll 1d10. If the foe rolls higher, smothering does not occur and the foe is considered to have broken free. If the rolls are equal, the foe is smothered but takes no damage until the following round. If the wizard rolls higher, the difference between the two rolls equals the additional hit point damage suffered by his foe, and smothering continues into the next round. On this second round, both combatants roll 1d10 again. A smothered foe who rolls higher than the wizard has broken free. If the wizard rolls higher or equal, smoth-



ering continues—and in either case, the wizard's roll also equals the additional smothering damage suffered by the foe in this round. This process continues until the foe breaks free or is slain.

Determine blinding in the same manner, though no damage is suffered by a blinded foe. Smothered and blinded foes cannot speak, see, or cast spells, and can attempt only one attack or other movement (such as getting out a weapon or throwing an item away) per round while fighting against the tentacles. Attacks made by a creature fighting tentacle blinding or smothering are launched at a -2 penalty. The same penalty is also applied to their ability checks.

A wizard with a *hand of tentacles* can always grapple a weapon, but can only grapple the body of an opponent who has no wings, prehensile tail, or tentacles of his own, and who is no more than 50 pounds heavier than the grappling wizard. Too-heavy opponents that are not obviously too large will be discovered only when the successful attack roll for the grappling ends in no grappling at all. To determine the results of grappling attempts that succeed, both wizard and opponent roll 1d10. If the foe rolls higher, he breaks free of the grappling at the beginning of the following round. If the wizard rolls higher, grappling is successful for the round in which it began and the entire following round, unless and until the wizard desires to end the grappling. During that following round, rolls of 1d10 are made and compared again, this process continuing until the wizard desires to end the grappling or the foe breaks free.

A tentacle-wielding wizard who successfully grapples a foe can prevent the foe from moving in a desired direction, or prevent him or her from getting out a weapon or item or manipulating it in any way. The foe's Armor Class is worsened by 5, and the wizard can choose to attack with a one-handed weapon (such as a dagger). A tentacle-wielding wizard who successfully grapples a foe's weapon can prevent all attacks from it, and force the foe to relinquish it if they wish to move the limb they are holding it with.

A *hand of tentacles* can be used to try to deflect (successful wizard attack roll required) or snare (a second successful attack roll by the wizard is required) incoming missile weapons, preventing them from doing damage to the wizard. They can only defend against one incoming missile per round. The tentacles cannot successfully wield missile weapons, but can wield any weapons the caster usually employs, with an attack roll penalty of -1. The caster of a *hand of tentacles* suffers no damage from damage done to the tentacles, but all the tentacles disappear instantly (dropping any held items) if the tentacles, which are considered Armor Class 7, suffer as much or more hit point damage than the caster's own hit point total.

A *hand of tentacles* spell can only successfully be cast by a mage whose normal body possesses fingers. Mages who have lost a hand or the fingers of a hand can cast the spell so as to replace their missing hand or digits, but the presence of the tentacles still prevents them from properly casting spells with their other hand, because it twitches—very slightly—in response to their attempts to control the tentacles.

The material component of a *hand of tentacles* is a piece of the tentacle of an octopus, squid, or other tentacled creature (which may be fresh or pickled, but the spell will not work if it is dried out).

Irithra's Spelltouch (Wiz 2; Enchantment)

Range:	Touch
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	One item (of less weight and volume than caster's body)
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2
Saving Throw:	None

When cast on a nonliving item, this spell allows another spell (priest or wizard magic of 3rd level or less) cast on it in the following round to hang fire, not taking effect until the item touches a target creature. The caster of the *spelltouch* can specify what race and sex, or type (i.e. undead, summoned, living, avian) of creature triggers and is affected by the second spell. The second spell (which need not be known to, or be castable by, the caster of the *spelltouch*) is unleashed by contact between the item and a specified triggering creature, but need not be a spell that affects only that creature. It is a literal "unleashing," not a directable casting: No spell that requires active intent or direction to operate during or after casting (such as *magic jar*, *wizard eye*, or even *magic missile*, which involves caster selection of a specific target) can be successfully unleashed via *spelltouch*. It will simply be stored, untriggerable—and thus wasted. No wild magic spell can be stored by means of a *spelltouch*. Regardless of the triggering conditions specified, neither the caster of the *spelltouch* nor the caster of the stored spell (if they are different beings) can trigger the stored spell; to the *spelltouch*, they are invisible.

For example, a gem sent into a throne room could be the focus of an unleashed *fireball* when triggered by the touch of a courtier ("a living human" and "male" or "female" can be specified, but not "a guard," "a wizard," or "the king"). If any being in the area of effect of such an unleashed spell is of a type specified as immune in the *spelltouch* casting, the being gains a +4 bonus to all applicable saving throws. If the enchanted item is touched by an immune being, either the second spell is not triggered by that touch, or the being escapes all harm from the spell



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thus triggered (whichever is specified by the *spelltouch* caster). The *spelltouch* storage item radiates a faint dweomer. Attempts to magically identify its enchantments will never reveal more than "one to-be-triggered magic stored by another, underlying enchantment." If the item is thrown at an intended target, the hurler (who need not be the caster of the *spelltouch* or of the stored spell) must make a successful attack roll to hit the target and unleash the stored spell. If the item misses, the magic is undisturbed (unless the fragility of the item and the situation causes the item to be fractured).

If the *spelltouched* item is shattered, or a major portion of it broken away, the stored spell is lost, silently and harmlessly dissipating without changing the appearance or nature of the storage item. This also occurs if the *spelltouched* item comes into the area of effect of a *dispel magic* or within 10 feet of any other *spelltouched* item (i.e. another item upon which this spell has been cast, to store another spell). *Spelltouch* storage otherwise lasts for 1 turn per level of the *spelltouch*-caster (this duration is unaffected by the level, type, or level of caster of the second, stored spell).

If a *spelltouch* storage item is touched by another spell of the exact sort it is storing (e.g. a coin storing a *fireball* is caught in the blast of another *fireball*, but not if caught in a *meteor swarm* or the path of a rolling *flaming sphere*), the result is a violent but contained explosion: Within a 20-foot-diameter sphere centered on the storage item, all beings instantly suffer 6d12 hit points of damage, and all items must save vs. disintegration, but destructive effects stop at the boundary of the sphere. No flames or shock waves pass, or hurled matter continues, outward. The *spelltouch* storage item is vaporized in the blast. An identical explosion occurs the instant a second *spelltouch* spell is cast on an item already storing a spell by means of an earlier *spelltouch*.

The material components of this spell are a pinch of powdered gemstone (of any type and value) and a pinch of the ash left by any fire created or augmented by a spell, combined with a drop of water and touched to the item during the casting.

This spell is often used by mages who must take magic into a place or situation where they cannot bring material components or openly engage in spellcasting, or send it (via a nonspellcaster) where they cannot go. Unamundass "the Butcher," an early king of Westgate, was slain by means of this spell when he took hold of a plate of food, and a *fireball* stored in the plate by *spelltouch* ignited. The entire city knew that Unamundass surrounded himself with exclusively female slaves and courtiers. He was the first male to touch the plate after it received the enchantment.

Third-level Spell

Shield of Chains (Wiz 3; Evocation)

Range:	40 yards
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 turn
Saving Throw:	1/2

This spell brings into being a shieldlike upright rectangular field in midair, in which a long length of chain whirls and flails endlessly. The chain looks like gleaming silver metal, but is actually a solidified construct of magical force. The shield of chain moves as the caster wills, at MV 16 (A), so it can be thrust at foes like a weapon, left to fill a corridor or doorway, and moved with the caster like a real shield. A *shield of chains* has often been used against large numbers of skeletal undead in battle.

Any creatures (including the caster) who try to charge through a *shield of chains* takes an entire round to do so and suffer 3d6 hit points of battering and bludgeoning damage. This increases to 4d8 hit points per round if the shield is moved to envelop them, or their circumstances prevent them from breaking contact with it.

A *shield of chains* survives contact with cold-, heat-, fire-, or electricity-based spells without harm. Contact with electricity or magical fire causes a *shield of chains* to do greater damage (an additional 1d10) for all contacts on the round that follows, and no lightning bolt or other electricity-based or focused energy-discharge magic (i.e. all bolts, rays, and beams) can pass through a *shield of chains*. All will be stopped at its surface. A *shield of chains* is destroyed by any contact with the surface of an *antimagic shell* or more powerful magic-scouring effect, but a *dispel magic* spell has its normal chance to affect the *shield*.

The material components of a *shield of chains* spell are a single link of real forged chain that has seen some use (or two linked metal rings from chain mail or anything, even wire twisted together by the caster), and two hairs or threads (of any size and source) tangled together.

Fourth-level Spell

Gutsnake (Wiz 4; Alteration, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	6 rounds
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	4
Saving Throw:	None



This spell causes a 14-foot-long, prehensile tentacle to sprout from the caster's midriff (if his stomach is not bared to the world, torn clothing will be involved). The eellike protuberance has no eyes, but ends in a set of snapping jaws (which bite for $2d4+2$ hp damage). The tentacle is supple, responsive, and communicates no sensation of pain to the caster. Moreover, damage done to it has no effect on the caster, though the *gutsnake* (which is Armor Class 6) vanishes if dealt more than 33 hit points of cumulative damage.

A *gutsnake* strikes once per round, operating in addition to any attacks or spells launched by the wizard it is attached to, and though its formative magic makes it seem weightless (so that its caster is unlikely to overbalance), the clumsiness caused by its unfamiliar presence reduces the caster's movement by 3 and worsens his Armor Class by 4.

A *gutsnake* can be directed to bite, bludgeon (flailing for 1d8 hp damage), or constrict. Biting and constricting require the same successful attack roll as the caster needs to hit in combat. Bludgeoning will be successful with an attack roll that is 2 points less than the caster needs to land an attack.

To constrict, a *gutsnake* must strike and try to wrap around a foe. Its impact does only 1 hit point damage, and then 1d20 is rolled for both the caster and the foe. If the foe's roll is higher, the attempt to constrict fails. The foe is prevented from readying any new weapon or tool, and the next round then begins with both wizard and foe free to act as they please. If the wizard's roll is higher, constriction occurs, for an additional 1d4 hp damage, and the foe is prevented from moving from that spot or using his arms (if any). On the following round, constriction causes 1d6 hp damage, the foe and the wizard then make fresh 1d20 rolls to determine if the foe escapes (with a higher roll), and the foe then makes a second 1d20 roll to see if he can free a limb or item (if still constricted) or attempt some other action in the remainder of the round (if freedom was gained). To succeed in either, this second 1d20 roll must be higher than the foe's first 1d20 roll in the same round. This process continues until the spell expires or freedom is gained.

The caster can will his own *gutsnake* out of existence at any time, ending the spell. The material components of a *gutsnake* spell are a piece of snakeskin and a fang of any size, from any sort of reptile.

Fifth-level Spells

Battlestar (Wiz 5; Evocation)

Range:	60 yds. + 10 yds./level
Duration:	1 round
Area of Effect:	1-6 targets
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	5
Saving Throw:	Special

This spell brings into being a luminous sphere above the caster's head that bursts to hurl forth twelve *magic missiles* in six pairs. The caster can send these pairs at up to six separate targets, or hurl them at any lesser number (the pairs cannot be split up). Each *missile* deals 1d4+1 hp damage, but mobile, unhampered target creatures are allowed saving throws vs. spell (one save for each pair of *missiles* directed against them). If successful, only one *missile* strikes home, and the other misses and fades away. If the save fails, both *missiles* strike.

The material component of a *battlestar* spell is a glass marble or smooth and spherical translucent stone of any sort.

Ghosstalk

(Wiz 5; Abjuration, Evocation, Alteration)

Range:	Special
Duration:	5 rounds
Area of Effect:	Caster and one other being
Components:	S
Casting Time:	5
Saving Throw:	None

This spell allows the caster to continue conversing with (hearing and talking to) a specific creature who is within earshot during casting, and with whom the caster has been or is conversing. The magic does not allow the caster to understand languages and terms he is unfamiliar with, but does allow him to continue a conversation normally even when the other creature has moved a great distance away, so long as they remain on the same plane. Translocational magic (such as *teleport*) and spells cast on either the *ghosstalk* caster or the other linked creature (such as *invisibility*, *fly*, or hostile spell attacks), and spellcasting by either being in the link, do not end the *ghosstalk*, but are audible as bursts of confused sound.

The voices appear in the ears of the caster and the linked being—that is, their own voices and any tapping or other noises made by direct contact with their bodies. Background noises and conversations are not transferred by this spell (so a *ghosstalk*-linked man muttering at a noisy party would be clearly heard by the caster, without any of the revelry, and a *ghosstalk*-linked man



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swinging a pick at ice would add no ice-cracking noises to the conversation, but would add crunching noises made by his own boots, or any sounds made by his hands on the pick). A man unable to speak could slap himself, tap his own teeth with a fingernail, or make grunts and squeaks that would all be clearly heard by the person "at the other end" of this spell, though they would only have meaning if a code had been worked out beforehand.

If the caster has a second *ghosttalk* spell, and casts it while still conversing using an active *ghosttalk*, it extends the conversation for another 5 rounds after the first *ghosttalk* has run its full length (regardless of exactly when the second spell is cast). A third *ghosttalk* cannot successfully be added, a *ghosttalk* cast by another individual cannot be added, and this extension will not work if the first spell has expired before the second takes effect.

This magic is often used by wizards to converse with and direct a companion who is exploring a tomb, tunnel, or flooded area. Its name is derived from wizards using it to speak with someone now far away, who were thought by observers to be "talking with ghosts."

Spell Trigger

(Wiz 5; Alteration, Conjunction, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	5
Saving Throw:	None

When memorizing this spell, a wizard must select another wizard or priest spell of 4th level or lower. This magic must be cast in its usual fashion immediately after the *spell trigger* is memorized (and if its caster is not the *trigger*-casting wizard himself, that caster must touch the *trigger*-caster during casting). The spell will not take effect, but will instead be "stored" in nothingness, linked to the *spell trigger*. The wizard who has memorized the *spell trigger* then utters the triggering conditions for the spell: a specific summary of circumstances akin to those that activate a *magic mouth* spell. The conditions cannot specify time (including the word "Now!"), alignment, individual beings, or have more than ten qualifiers, and they will only be met if fulfilled within 20 feet of the item that the *spell trigger* is subsequently cast upon.

The conditions can specify an activity or activities, and can be very detailed. For instance, "When King Hlondas pours himself a glass of evermead while he is alone" is an invalid set of conditions, and the *trigger* caster would immediately know this and have to

choose another set, aloud—but a revision to the following would be valid: "When a bearded male human wearing a crown and clad in a garment that has a golden swan on the breast pours a glass of evermead while there is no other living being within the same room." It would only be considered fulfilled by the *spell trigger*, however, if the pouring occurred within 20 feet of whatever item the *trigger* has been cast on. Note that *triggers* cast on portable items can be moved about without ruining the *trigger* magic, but that this sometimes leads to inadvertent triggering.

The wizard would then carry the memorized *trigger* until finding a desired item to cast it on. The stored spell is lost, without effect, if the wizard is killed, *feebled-minded*, or forced into insanity before casting the *trigger*.

A *spell trigger* can linger for centuries if its triggering conditions are not met. It vanishes harmlessly, along with the spell it is waiting to unleash, if it comes into contact with a *dispel magic*, an *antimagic shell*, or a similar spell-scouring magic.

The material component of a *spell trigger* is a pinch of dust from a spell scroll that has been burned while bearing any complete, usable wizard or priest spell.

Sixth-level Spells

Dispel Shunt (Wiz 6; Abjuration)

Range:	0
Duration:	1 turn
Area of Effect:	Caster
Components:	V, S
Casting Time:	6
Saving Throw:	None

When this strange and powerful magic-scouring spell is cast, it creates an invisible aura about its caster that deflects incoming *dispel magic* spells away from the *shunt*-caster and all items worn or carried by him. The *dispel shunt* directs such magic elsewhere (without altering their normal effects) under the direction of the *shunt*-caster.

The still-active *dispel magic* can be thrust 10 feet away from the *shunt* caster for every experience level the mage possesses, in any direction of his choice, but rebounds from all magical walls and barriers of 4th level and greater it is sent against. If the *shunt* caster tries to send it directly back at its source, 1d20 is rolled for each mage. A higher score for the *shunt* caster means that the *dispel magic* does return to affect its caster. A higher score for the caster of the *dispel magic* results in both *dispel magic* and *dispel shunt* spells being destroyed, in a spectacular but harmless soundless midair explosion of whirling lights, dust motes, and surging magical currents.



Rolls of 1d20 must also be made and matched whenever a *dispel shunt* comes into contact with an *antimagic shell*. If the roll for the *shunt* is higher, the two magics destroy each other in a vivid but harmless explosion. If the roll for the *antimagic shell* is greater, it survives but the *dispel shunt* fades away. The same test is made when a *dispel shunt* comes into contact with a *Mordenkainen's disjunction*, except that 1d12 should be rolled for the *shunt*, and 1d20 for the *disjunction*.

A *dispel shunt* confers a +2 bonus to the 1d20 roll made by items resisting the draining of a *rod of cancellation*, but confers no other protection against such rod attacks. If the beam from a *wand of negation* strikes the aura of an active *dispel shunt*, the *shunt* is destroyed but protects all items worn or carried by its caster from *negation*, and sends a backlash along the beam that instantly causes the wand's powers to go quiescent for 1-2 rounds.

Scouring Wind (Wiz 6; Alteration, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	4 rounds
Area of Effect:	10-foot-wide path, 10 yds. long
Components:	V,S,M
Casting Time:	6
Saving Throw:	None

This spell creates a magical *gust of wind* that has all the powers and properties of that 3rd-level wizard spell, extended to four rounds (for example, it slows the movements of larger-than-man-sized flying creatures seeking to make headway against it by 50% for its entire duration). In addition to these properties, a scouring wind is laced with dagger-shaped, semisolid teeth of force, akin to the material that forms a *wall of force*, and these hundreds of tiny, tumbling, stabbing, and slicing objects deal 3d4 hit points of damage per round to all living and undead creatures in the wind's path, and force "crushing blow" saving throws on all fragile items



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in the path, whether they are borne along on the *scouring wind* or not.

The material components of a *scouring wind* spell are a seed of any sort that has in the past been windblown and a pointed piece of ice or glass.

Talking Stone (Wiz 6; Evocation)

Range:	Unlimited
Duration:	1 round/level
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 rounds
Saving Throw:	None

A wizard who casts a *talking stone* spell can then, while touching one stone (with his bare flesh), speak—and his voice emerges from another stone anywhere on Toril that he has previously touched. The stone must be a single piece small enough for him to lift, not bedrock or part of a cliff, and he must be able to visualize it clearly, though he need not know its current surroundings.

The caster of a *talking stone* can hear out of the remote stone, too, as if it were one of his ears (though the sounds are heard only in his head, not out of the stone he is touching). No visual images, spells, or magical effects of any kind can be sent along a *talking stone* link in either direction, and the link is broken instantly, ending the spell, if the wizard's touch on the stone ends.

This spell is often used to call home to a sanctuary, keep, or abode of friends, by speaking through a statuette or other token stone left in a particular spot for this purpose. It can also be used to listen in on a room from far away, to eavesdrop on conversations or to detect illicit entry. The spell will not work (and thus is wasted) if either stone is entirely enclosed in any sort of magical barrier, but will function if even a small opening exists in the intervening magic.

The material components of a *talking stone* spell are two stones of different sorts of rock, bound together by fine thread or wire. The stone touched by the caster and the remote stone he speaks and hears out of are not altered or harmed by the magic in any way.

Transcribe (Wiz 6; Alteration)

Range:	Touch
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	6
Saving Throw:	None

When this spell is used, its caster can at any time within 1 turn (if more time elapses, the spell fades and is lost) lay a hand on an existing *glyph*, rune, or symbol, cast by

anyone at any time, and does not trigger it by so doing. The magical character adheres to the hand and can be carried away, to be transferred to another solid surface. Nonmagical writings are unaffected by a *transcribe* spell and cannot be picked up.

The magical character is not released merely by the hand that bears it subsequently touching something solid. It only adheres to a new surface when the caster wills it to. Any magical character carried about by means of this spell is laid down unaltered and operative, though its movement may have made the conditions of its triggering difficult or impossible to achieve.

If the caster undertakes any other spellcasting while a *transcribe* spell is in effect and he is not holding a magical character, the *transcribe* magic is lost and wasted. If the caster attempts any spellcasting while holding a magical character, it takes instant effect—on the caster (and the *transcribe* spell ends). Magic unleashed by silent act of will alone is not considered spellcasting in this context only.

This spell is typically used to clean areas of magical traps, while retaining the magic for later use or study elsewhere.

The material component of a *transcribe* spell is a piece of slate that has been scoured bare and smooth on at least one of its surfaces.

Seventh-level Spells

Greater Spell Trigger

(Wiz 7; Alteration, Conjuration, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V,S,M
Casting Time:	7
Saving Throw:	None

When memorizing a *greater spell trigger*, a wizard must select another wizard or priest spell of 6th level or lower, which must be cast in the usual way within an hour of the *spell trigger* being memorized. If its caster is not the *trigger*-memorizing wizard, that caster must touch the *trigger*-memorizing mage at the end of their casting).

At some later time, the wizard who memorized the *greater spell trigger* then casts it on an item or spot of his choosing, and at that time decides and utters aloud the triggering conditions for the spell: a specific summary of circumstances akin to those that activate a *magic mouth* spell. The conditions cannot specify alignment, individual beings, or have more than ten qualifiers, and they will only be met if fulfilled within 40 feet of the item or spot that the *spell trigger* has been cast upon.

The conditions can specify an activity or activities and can be very detailed. For instance, "When the sorceress



Jalythe takes off her *ring of the ram* while in daylight" is an invalid set of conditions, and the *trigger*-caster would immediately know this and have to choose another set, aloud—but a revision to the following would be valid: "When a tall, slender, blonde female human with a mole on her left cheek and a scar across the back of her right hand takes a ring off the middle finger of her left hand while in daylight." It would only be considered fulfilled by the *greater spell trigger*, however, if the activity occurred within its 40-foot range.

The stored spell could of course be triggered by someone else beside Jalythe, if that person fulfilled the visual conditions, or by Jalythe removing the wrong ring. The *trigger* cannot think or judge, and can only operate on conditions that would be seen and heard by a human eye located at or above the spot where the *trigger* has been cast, but free to swivel and peer as it chooses. Thus, specifying something it might not be able to see—identifying Jalythe as having another scar on her belly, which happens to be hidden by her normal garb, for instance—could lead to the *trigger* not operating when intended. *Triggers* cannot refer to previous off-stage activities, such as "a woman who has eaten eels within the last hour," and the wizard is immediately made aware that these are invalid conditions. (Note that a condition that specifies simply "Now!" is valid, and can turn many a spell into a verbal-only magic with a casting time of 2, due to the utterance plus the time needed to direct the unleashed magic.) *Greater spell triggers* can specify time elapsing from when they are cast, for example, "When winter next comes," or "more than a month after this *trigger* is cast."

Note that *triggers* cast on portable items can be moved about without ruining the *trigger* magic, but that this sometimes leads to inadvertent triggering.

A wizard carrying a memorized *greater spell trigger* loses it and the stored spell that is "riding" it, silently and without effect, if he is killed, *feeble-minded*, or forced into insanity before casting the *trigger*.

A *greater spell trigger* can linger for centuries if its triggering conditions are not met. It cannot be affected by a *dispel magic*, an *antimagic shell*, or any spell-scouring magic short of a *Mordenkainen's disjunction*, which eradicates a *greater spell trigger* and its stored spell on a roll of 1–9 on 1d20; sets off the *trigger*, causing the stored spell to take effect as it was set to do on a roll of 10–14; and leaves the *trigger* and its stored spell unaffected on a roll of 15–20.

The material components of a *greater spell trigger* are a pinch of dust from a spell scroll that has been burned while bearing any complete, usable wizard or priest spell, and a drop of blood from a being who has been affected by, or who has cast, either a *contingency* spell or a *permanency* spell (or certain related magic).

Jalensifer's Trident (Wiz 7; Alteration)

Range:	0
Duration:	Instantaneous
Area of Effect:	Caster
Components:	V
Casting Time:	7
Saving Throw:	None

Use of this spell allows its caster to change a single 5th- or 6th-level spell that he has memorized into any three 1st-level magics that he is familiar with (that is, cast more than a dozen times, the last time being within 3 days of casting the *trident*). These extra 1st-level magics need not all be the same spell, and can be carried in the caster's mind for up to 1 day after their creation (if need be in addition to his full roster of 1st-level spells memorized in the usual way). If any of these extra spells are carried longer, they fade away and are wasted.

The three extra magics can be cast without need for verbal, somatic, or material components. If the *trident* caster desires, the extra spells can all be unleashed in the same round, by silent act of will alone—so long as the caster attempts no normal spellcasting in that round (if this rule is broken, whichever invalid casting begins later simply does not work, no magic being awakened or lost).

Many mages use the *trident* to give themselves three *magic missile* spells that they can release without warning and all at the same time—even if they are wounded, bound, or being strangled or otherwise kept silent.

The material components of a *Jalensifer's trident* are a tiny metal trident or three-tined fork, and a piece of parchment or vellum that has previously borne magic (such as a scroll that once held a spell that has been read, and of course vanished). During casting, the tines of the fork or trident must all pierce this paper.

Lesser Cleaving (Wiz 7; Alteration)

Range:	70 yards
Duration:	Instantaneous
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S
Casting Time:	7
Saving Throw:	None

This spell cuts a tunnel through all magical barriers of 6th level (such as *antimagic shell*) or lower, and similarly disintegrates all physical barriers or objects that it cannot thrust aside, which stand between the caster and his chosen target creature. The target must be visible to the caster when casting is begun, and the *cleaving* tunnels to the target when the casting is complete, regardless of the caster's wishes as to damage done as the *cleaving* operates (if the target moves between the casting beginning



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and the spell taking effect, its path may not be where the caster anticipated or intended). The spell cuts a tunnel pointing precisely at an out-of-range target, to the limits of its range.

If the target is in range when the *cleaving* takes effect, the caster can elect to let its magic whisk him to a spot of his choosing near the target and enable him to unerringly deliver a physical attack or a touch-delivery spell. This attack must be made separately, on the round that follows, but the magic of the *cleaving* makes the caster's attack roll automatically successful, and links the caster to the target so that they will remain together, even if the target employs plane-shifting or translocational magic in an attempt to escape. The caster can choose not to let the magic take him elsewhere, or to another plane, and can even choose to restrict the *cleaving* to merely cutting its tunnel, and leaving him at the spot where he cast it.

Casting a *lesser cleaving* instantly drains a wizard of 7 hit points (which can be regained normally or through magical healing), and also strips a randomly chosen memorized spell from the caster's mind. If the caster has no other spells memorized at the time, the spell powers itself by taking two charges from any magical item carried by its caster. If no magical item that uses charges is in the caster's possession, it robs any other sort of carried magical item of 1d3 days of operation. Failing that, the caster of the *cleaving* suffers the permanent loss of 1d10 hit points (in addition to the 7 already lost).

Obliviasphere (Wiz 7; Abjuration, Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	1 turn
Area of Effect:	1 foot/level in diameter
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	7
Saving Throw:	None

This spell causes a stationary sphere of magical force to form, centered on the caster and extending through any nearby solid material, including the surface the caster is standing on. The sphere is visible only as a faint, shaped shimmering in the air. The caster can make it smaller than the usual dimensions during casting, if desired, but cannot move the sphere or alter its size, once it appears.

Within the *obliviasphere*, magic is unaffected. Air, thrown or projected items, undead, and inactive magical items and dormant magic (including hung spells) can pass freely in and out of the sphere without harm. All living beings (except the caster, who can enter and leave as often as desired) trying to enter the *obliviasphere*, or all magic trying to pass in or out of it, is

blocked and affected as if by a wild magic zone, all effects radiating outward only from the surface of the sphere at the point, inside or outside, where the sphere was touched. For example, if a *lightning bolt* is cast from outside the sphere so as to enter the sphere, it rebounds in a random direction, accompanied by a randomly directed wild magic effect erupting from the spot where the bolt touched the sphere. A person trying to enter the sphere would find it as hard and unyielding as a stone wall, and would taste a wild magic effect instantly upon contact.

To determine the wild magic effects unleashed by an *obliviasphere*, refer to Table 2: Wild Surge Results in the *Tome of Magic*, or roll 1d8 and refer to the following list:

- 1: Ground shakes, sky goes dark, wild (but harmless) lightning play in the distance—and, at DM's option, a great, unseen bell tolls once (effects last one round).
- 2: *Monster summoning IV*. Monsters appearing attack everyone outside the sphere, and may or may not wander away before *obliviasphere* vanishes (will be hostile to beings who were inside the sphere).
- 3: Objects begin to fall from the sky (each being must make a Dexterity check or be struck by one object for 5d4 hit points damage); 1d12 objects fall, will all be duplicates of something mundane and odd, such as a roast turkey, a bent shovel, a warrior's helm, etc. and may vary slightly in size and shape.
- 4: A *cone of cold* (12 feet in diameter and 60 feet long, causing 12d4+12 hit points of damage) blasts forth, briefly filling the air with tiny ice crystals.
- 5: A volley of *magic missiles* (eight blue-white-glowing, flying bolts, each dealing 1d4+1 hit points damage) flies at all beings within sight of the sphere, one *missile* striking at each being until either available targets or roster of *missiles* is used up, whereupon random beings may face no *missile* or multiple *missiles*.
- 6: A *polymorph other* spell snarls out of the sphere to affect one randomly chosen creature within 120 feet. The being automatically survives its System Shock roll and retains its own intelligence and personality, as it is transformed into a myconid. Detailed in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome, these bipedal walking toadstools are AC 10, MV 9, AT 1: clubbing with hands for 1d4 damage per hit die of transformed creature, SA spore clouds (which is harmless for 1d4 hours after transformation, thereafter having the usual effects and the myconid having control over the types sprayed), SD poisonous skin (the transformed being automatically makes a successful system shock roll if returned to his proper form).



- 7: A *reverse gravity* spell affects a randomly chosen 30-foot-square area, causing all creatures and items lighter than any two creatures therein to fall upward for 80 feet—and then plunge back down (8d6 falling damage to all creatures not able to employ *fly*, *feather fall*, or other magical means of slowing or lessening impact; all items must save vs. "fall").
- 8: Bodies of all living beings within 120 feet of the sphere give off swirling clouds of blue smoke glittering with sparks (harmless effect, cannot start fires or do damage).

The caster of an *obliviasphere* is free to cast other magic and concentrate on other things the moment the sphere has formed, and can by act of causes the sphere to fade to nothingness before its normal expiration.

The material components of an *obliviasphere* spell are a natural rock crystal of any sort (gemstone or worthless) that has been polished into smooth translucence; any remnant (fresh or dried) of a myconid, from spore to body scrap; and a piece of any inorganic material that has in the past been affected by wild magic.

Eighth-level Spell

Weavecall (Wiz 8; Alteration)

Range:	Touch
Duration:	1 round
Area of Effect:	1-2 mages
Components:	V, S
Casting Time:	8
Saving Throw:	None

This spell snatches power from the Weave to make all magic cast, wielded, or unleashed in the following round by the *weavecall* caster and a second, touched recipient wizard (or, at the caster's option, not himself but instead two recipient mages, both of whom must be touched during casting) strike at +6 to hit, for maximum possible damage, and with all saving throws against them made at a 4-point penalty. The strength of a *weavecall* is not altered by the number of mages it boosts, or whether or not one of them is the caster.

If two *weavecall* magics are cast in the same area, or with areas of effect that touch or overlap even the tiniest amount, within 1d4+3 months of each other, the second *weavecall* results not in the desired result at all, but instead in a *reverse gravity* effect centered on (and effecting) its caster, operating for an upward "fall" of 140+1d20 feet. A wizard who tries to memorize more than two *weavecalls* at a time, or cast the spell more than four times in any day (any period of 144 consecutive turns), is instantly *feeble-minded*.



Ninth-level Spells

Dweomerbanish

(Wiz 9; Abjuration, Alteration, Enchantment)

Range:	90 yards
Duration:	Instantaneous
Area of Effect:	40-foot radius
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	9
Saving Throw:	None

This spell banishes all active and lasting, even if presently inactive, magic in its spherical area of effect (which passes and functions through the ground or floor, and all other solid objects or materials). Multiple magics are eradicated, even scouring effects such as *dispel magic*, *Mordenkainen's disjunction*, and *spell engine*. Enspelled creatures and items touched even peripherally by a *dweomerbanish* are purged of enchantments (beings are freed of *imprisonment*, *sink* effects, *feeble-mindedness*, *charms*, and *geas* spells). Items bearing permanent enchantments are rendered inert for 1d12 turns. Area-effect magics are only banished in that part of their operation that intersects with the *dweomerbanish* area of effect, a lasting chopping off that leaves them affecting a smaller area (should their area of effect be entirely subsumed by the *dweomerbanish*, they are erad-



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icated). Permanent, multifold magical effects such as mythals and *wardmists* are disrupted for 1d12 turns, not wiped out forever.

Dweomerbanish can only affect spell effects with a duration longer than instantaneous, but is powerful enough to sweep away a *time stop*, all known barriers (such as *prismatic sphere* and *sphere of wonder*), and evoked objects such as the various *Bigby's hand* spells.

Casting a *dweomerbanish* costs a mage a permanent loss of one hit point plus a temporary (may be regained through normal rest or magical healing) loss of 1d12 hit points. Magic cast by gods, avatars, and the highest-ranking servitor creatures of a deity (for example, by Mystra's Chosen, but not by a high priest of Mystra) withstands a *dweomerbanish* unaffected, even if they are cantrips or 1st-level spells.

The material components of a *dweomerbanish* spell are two fingerbones from dead or undead mages who must at some point in life have attained at least 14th level. The bones can, but need not, be from the remains of the same being.

Lauthdryn's Cleaving (Wiz 9; Alteration)

Range:	90 yards
Duration:	Instantaneous
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S
Casting Time:	9
Saving Throw:	None

This powerful spell cuts through all magical barriers of 8th level or lower, shearing lasting breaches through them, and similarly disintegrates all physical barriers or objects that it cannot thrust aside, out of the way, that stand between the caster of the *cleaving* and his chosen target creature. The target creature must be visible to the caster when casting begins, and the *cleaving* slashes a tunnel to the target when the casting is complete, regardless of the caster's wishes as to damage done as the *cleaving* operates (if the target moves between the commencement of casting and the spell taking effect, its path may not be where the caster anticipated or intended). If the target is out of range, the spell cuts a tunnel pointing precisely at him, stopping when the limit of its range is reached.

If the target is within range when the *cleaving* takes effect, the caster can elect to let its magic whisk him to a precise spot beside or near the target, and empower him to unerringly deliver a single physical attack or a touch-delivery spell. This attack must be made separately, on the round that follows, but the magic of the *cleaving* spell makes the success of the caster's attack roll automatic and links the caster to the target so that they will remain together, even if the target employs plane-shifting or translocational magic in an attempt to escape. The caster can choose not to let the magic take him elsewhere, or to another plane, and can even choose to restrict the *cleaving* to merely cutting its tunnel, and leaving him at the spot where he cast it.

Casting a *Lauthdryn's cleaving* instantly drains a wizard of 9 hit points (which can be regained normally or through magical healing), and also strips one (random) memorized spell from the caster's mind. If the caster has no other spells memorized at the time, the spell powers itself by taking two charges from any magical item carried by its caster. If no magical item that uses charges is in the possession of the caster, it will rob any other sort of carried magical item of 1d3 days of operation. Failing that, the caster of the *cleaving* will suffer the permanent loss of 1d12 hit points (in addition to the 9 already lost).



Weavestrike

(Wiz 9; Enchantment/Charm, Evocation)

Range:	10 yards/level
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	One creature
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 round
Saving Throw:	Special

This spell creates a smashing wave of destruction, visible as a rippling in the air that strikes at a single chosen target creature. A *weavestrike* wave cannot miss, strike the wrong creature, or be outrun. It will not work at all (wasting the spell) if its intended target is out of range when casting is begun, but having successfully formed, it will follow a target anywhere on Toril, regardless of translocational magic or barriers used by the target, and will wait for the return of target beings who jump to another plane, tarrying 1 day per level of its caster before fading away (during this time it operates automatically, and its caster is free to memorize other spells, travel, and pay it no heed).

To determine the fate of a being struck by a *weavestrike*, rolls of 1d20 are made for the target and the *weavestrike*, and compared. The higher roll prevails. The first roll of 1d20 governs target paralysis, which lasts for 1 day (unless removed earlier by the application of other magic) if the *weavestrike* roll is higher than the target roll, and does not occur at all if the target roll is higher.

In like manner, a second pair of rolls is made to see if the target succumbs to the second effect of a *weavestrike*: a coma (victim cannot think, cast spells, frame plans, or remember any awareness of surroundings) lasting for 1 day unless magically removed sooner.

A third pair of rolls governs the most powerful effect of a *weavestrike*. The thrust of this powerful magic is represented by the fact that 2d20 are rolled for the spell, and the better result of the two rolls is compared to the target's lone 1d20 roll. If the *weavestrike* roll is higher, the target creature suffers complete loss of magical ability. This condition lasts for 9 days plus 1 day for each experience level of the *weavestrike*-caster (or less if the caster so wills).

Priests, beholders, dragons and dragonets, ki-rin, and all undead are immune to the coma and blanking of magical ability effects of a *weavestrike*.

The material components of a *weavestrike* spell are a pebble of any sort that has been washed up onto a beach by waves, and a pinch of bonedust or fragment of bone from any creature slain by a *weavestrike* spell or by the spells of any reigning Magister (or from a onetime Magister himself).

Wondercraft

(Wiz 9; Conjuration/Summoning, Enchantment, Invocation/Evocation)

Range:	0
Duration:	Special
Area of Effect:	Special
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 turn
Saving Throw:	Special

By means of this rare and difficult spell, a caster can duplicate a known magical item out of nothing (though *wondercraft* does involve and consume material components, no spell scrolls or physical items to be enchanted are employed).

The magical item to be duplicated must be one that the caster either made, or had a hand in making, or has possessed and personally used *all* powers of, in the past—not merely seen in operation or been told about. If it is something the caster has not made or helped make, the caster must have touched it at least once before casting the *wondercraft*. From the moment of casting, that touch must have occurred not longer ago than one month per experience level of the caster. Casting a *wondercraft* spell drains 1 point of Constitution from its caster, which returns a month after the casting. If a wizard ever casts *wondercraft* twice within a day (any period of 144 consecutive turns), 4 points of Constitution are instantly drained. If the spell is cast thrice by a mage within a day of first casting, its caster suffers the loss of 16 points of Constitution. (If someone were to attempt to cast *wondercraft* four times in such quick succession, the loss of constitution would be 256 points!)

If a *wondercraft* spell is used to duplicate a potion, scroll, or other one-time item, it has a 99% chance of working perfectly (a roll of 00 is always a failure).

If the caster of a *wondercraft* is trying to make any permanent or multiple-power magical item, he must successfully save vs. spell for each magical ability or special property the item possesses, or that part of the item simply will not work (and that caster forever fails in trying to add that particular ability to any magical item). Even powers successfully added to an item being assembled by *wondercraft* have a 30% chance each of being twisted into “something else” (substitute a randomly selected spell, or a power from the *wand of wonder* entry in the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*), and this chance increases by 10% per additional power of the item.

A *wondercraft* caster can choose to make his duplicate item have either a single magical power of the original item, or only a few powers, to minimize the chances of the duplicate going awry. The caster knows when a



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power has not been duplicated properly, but not precisely what effect has been substituted—until the item is used. Most magical items mentally communicate the general nature of their powers to anyone holding them. *Wondercraft* items with faulty powers falsely inform their bearer that they possess the powers they were supposed to have, not what they actually possess.

A *wondercraft* duplicate magical item lasts for 1 year per level of the *wondercraft*-caster (unless destroyed earlier) and crumbles into dust thereafter. There is no known means of repairing or conferring true permanency on *wondercraft* items, or of recharging or prolonging them (*wondercraft* items always begin with full possible charges, if they are duplicating an item that uses charges).

The material components of a *wondercraft* spell are three drops of water, three stones of any size, three pinches of ash from a fire, and three drops of dew or a flask of captured mist. All of these components must have previously been touched by any magic—for example, an *affect normal fires* spell used on the fire the ash came from—or perhaps the flames came from a *fireball*; an *airy water* spell cast on the specific volume of water from which the drops came; *stone tell* or a *glyph* cast on a stone block from which the three stones were chipped, and so on.

Artifacts

Magisters have a long history of destroying or hiding artifacts on Mystra's behalf—a history too long and labyrinthine to be dealt with in this book. However, the chapter in this work titled "Mystra's Choice" describes two artifacts born of Magisters—that is, created by them and empowered in part by their own life-essences and sentience.

Certain Magisters personally favored by Azuth or Mystra have been temporarily granted a special ability when they face an artifact being used to destroy spells, magical items, or wizards. This ability, revealed at the time and snatched away when the encounter ends, is the power to try to *teleport* the offending artifact away to a random location on Toril.

Its use requires the Magister to be able to identify and visualize (or directly see) the artifact, to exert his will during that round and do nothing else, and to sacrifice personal hit points (which may be regained by magical healing or normal rest). If the Magister puts a single hit point behind the effort, a roll of 16 or better on 1d20 effects the artifact. For each additional hit point expended, the number needed is reduced by one—so that a Magister expending 4 hit points, for example, needs to roll 13 or better to successfully affect the artifact. Unsuccessful attempts do drain the hit points, if any, expended in support of them.

Once the artifact has been affected, roll 1d12. On a roll of 1–3, the artifact goes inert (no powers work, and operating powers shut down) for 3 rounds. On a roll of 4, the artifact fails to function for the following round only. On a roll of 5 or 6, the artifact is *teleported* a mile away in a random direction, without its wielder. On a roll of 7–9, the artifact is *teleported* more than a mile distant, to a random destination anywhere on Toril, without its wielder. On a roll of 10, the artifact is *teleported* to a random spot anywhere on Toril, with its wielder (who is not harmed by the journey, and arrives in a safe locale). On a roll of 11, the artifact and the wielder are safely *teleported* to separate destinations anywhere on Toril. And on a roll of 12, the artifact is *teleported* to a specific pinpoint location of the Magister's choosing, anywhere on Toril, while the wielder is affected as if by a *dimension door* spell, to a spot of the Magister's choosing. This spot cannot be in contact with anything solid, but can be up in the air (forcing the wielder instantly into a fall, with the usual 1d6 per 10-feet-fallen damage).

Magisters have used this ability to hide or gain control of artifacts, to send them to inaccessible or remote locations, and to punish their wielders. It is gained in situations that rarely occur, but seems to amuse both the old and the new Mystra. The former Midnight never fails to provide it when the Magister is facing the fury of an artifact. The Magister can only affect one artifact at a time, but Azuth may intervene to snatch a Magister facing multiple artifacts out of danger.

Magical Items

Unsurprisingly, Magisters down the years have created, used, or modified a bristling arsenal of enchanted items. Many of these are now lost or forgotten. Others are secrets held by Mystra, Azuth, or even senior Mystran clergy in particular temples, to be revealed to Magisters in need only when conditions set by the Mother of All Magic are met.

This book does not attempt to cover all of the many, many variant or unique magical items employed by Magisters, but merely details those connected to current events, or other features Magisterial.

The chapter in this book titled "The Magister Now" details some magical items used by the current Magister; others appear hereafter.

Blast-Globes

XP Value: 2,500 **GP Value:** 10,000

The means of making these rare and powerful items are now a mystery to all but the most powerful Zhentarim (such as Manshoon and Sememmon). Others who knew the secrets of blast-globes perished in Shandril's battle with the beholders of the city (recounted in *Crown of*



Fire), or in the later fall of Zhentil Keep. (Elminster encounters a Zhentarim wizard who uses blast-globes in the novel *Shadows of Doom*.) Senior Zhentarim learned their devising from Sememmon, who bargained such secrets for his own initial rise in rank. He gained them by mind-reaming and slaying the Zhent mage Alvagaerus Firlhond . . . and Firlhond was given them by their initial creator, The Magister Isilger Mountrant. It is thought that less than a hundred blast-globes still exist, but folk in the Realms who have business (friendly or hostile) with Zhentarim may well meet with them—in all too dramatic a manner.

These deadly items consist of a dozen or so transparent, glossy-polished clear glass spheres clustered into an irregular, solid mass. They can be carried about without fear, as they are inert unless activated. *Blast-globes* are as fragile as other glass (receiving no bonuses on saving throws), and their magic dissipates harmlessly if even one sphere is cracked or shattered. The numbers and sizes of spheres vary from specimen to specimen, without altering the strength of the explosive effect shared by all *blast-globes*.

If any being who speaks a secret word of activation while in direct contact with any of its spheres activates a set of *blast-globes*, it becomes a deadly thing. The glass spheres begin to wink and glow with inner radiances (white, nonblinding lights equal to a *faerie fire* in intensity), and separate, rising with their own *levitation* powers to float and spin lazily around each other. This awakening takes one round, and if the globes are struck or dropped during this time, they shatter and release an uncontrolled 12d6 *chain lightning* effect. At the beginning of the second round after the word of activation is spoken, the whirling globes begin to pulse with sudden bright fire, and can then be thrown.

Once released by their activator, *blast globes* explode if they touch any solid item larger than a feather or small insect. (Their activator is in no way protected against the resulting blast.) The fierce explosion's main effects are visited on all beings and solid material within a 120-foot-radius sphere centered on where the globes contact a solid target, but can temporarily (2d4 rounds) deafen all beings within 200 feet of the shattering globes.

A *blast globe* detonation rends solid matter, dealing 7d12 hit points of damage (no saving throw) to all creatures within 50 feet of the shattering spheres. Beings from 50–120 feet distant take 6d12 hit points of damage and are allowed a saving throw for half damage. All creatures in the blast area are flung $1d8 \times 10$ feet away from the blast, but suffer no additional impact or landing damage from this journey (thanks to the roiling air that surrounds them). Items in the blast area must save vs. disintegration unless they are worn by, carried by, or

on the person of a being (in which case they must make two crushing blow saving throws to avoid destruction).

The spells *disintegrate* and *fireball* are known to be among the magic used in the creation of a set of *blast-globes*.

Gauntlets of Faerglamer

XP Value: 16,000 **GP Value:** 80,000

These curious items can be worn singly or in pairs, and can take one of three forms, as their wearer wills (changing from one appearance to another takes 2 full, consecutive rounds of flowing, during which time the gloves must be worn, and the wearer cannot handle objects or cast spells having somatic or material components): elbow-length, gauzy black silk ladies' gloves trimmed with lace and black and purple "glittershard" sequins, as worn by women of high fashion in wealthy realms. Dirty, poorly wrapped bandages that enshroud the flesh beneath in a continuous wrapping, like many mummies, or sleek but massively built metal war-gauntlets of like-new, rustless, silently moving condition.

In any and all of their three forms, *gauntlets of Faerglamer* are so supple and light as to permit the most intricate of activities (spellcasting, embroidery, picking locks, forging handwriting) while worn, and so sure of grip as to make it impossible for the wearer to drop any carried item (this does not mean that thrown objects are automatically caught by *gauntlet*-wearers, or that grasped items cannot be struck or forced out of their grasp—simply that they will not ever drop things by themselves with hands that are wearing *gauntlets of Faerglamer*). The form chosen has no effect on the powers of *gauntlets of Faerglamer* (which automatically alter to perfectly fit the relevant limbs of any M-sized creature donning them, and can stretch to accommodate talons and the like without being punctured), but the proximity of the two gloves of a matched set does.

If only the left *gauntlet* is worn, the *gauntlet* reflects any incoming *magic missile* spells back at their source. Once every 6 turns, the wearer can confer *invisibility* on himself or any single touched, willing creature, lasting for 12 rounds (or less, if he wills it to end sooner). The *gauntlet*-wearer retains this control even if the *invisibility* is affecting a recipient creature. Once every 20 turns the *gauntlet* can be made to emit a *flying fist* blow, a straight-line thrust, for up to 60 feet, of an invisible fistlike mass of solidified force that does not miss and can strike any visible target, forcing items to save vs. crushing blow at a -2 penalty, and creatures to suffer 3d4 hit points of damage.

If only the right *gauntlet* is worn, the *gauntlet* reflects any incoming *lightning bolt* and *chain lightning* spells straight back at their source. The wearer (only)



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can *dimension door* (jumps of up to 300 yards, always ending in safe arrivals, with dislocations to unintended destinations if need be) once every 4 turns. And once every 20 turns the *gauntlet* can be made to emit a *force thrust* beam, a bright ruby-red path six inches wide and 40 feet long that delivers a 2d6-hit-point-damage bludgeoning attack to the first creature it touches (a saving throw vs. spell for half damage is allowed), automatically spoiling target spellcasting and dealing double damage (4d6 hp, no saving throw allowed) to all nongaseous undead. Creatures struck by a *force thrust* beam are always held for one round in the hammering heart of the magic, but are thereafter free to move as they desire.

If both of a matched pair of *gauntlets of Faerglamer* are worn by the same being, additional powers can be activated at the wearer's will: *hold monster* (by touch, successful attack roll necessary, lasts 4 rounds, thereafter will not work on same creature until it has had four hours of freedom), *water breathing*, *locate object* (lasting up to 1 turn) once every 12 days, *passwall* every 22 days (lasts 2 hours), and *delayed blast fireball* once every 6 days (100-yard range, 20-foot-radius sphere, 8d6+8 hit point damage, wearer can cause it to detonate in 1–5 rounds, not needing to decide until target is where desired or fifth round is reached).

If mismatched *gauntlets of Faerglamer* are worn by the same being, that being simply gains the powers of both left and right *gauntlets*, but none of the combination powers. Matched *gauntlets* are left and right gloves enchanted together as a pair. Note that for every right *gauntlet*, its correct, matched left *gauntlet* may share identical powers with dozens of mismatched left *gauntlets of Faerglamer*.

All currently possible *gauntlet* powers are communicated mentally to any creature donning a *gauntlet of Faerglamer*. Aside from the automatic, always-operative specific *spell reflections*, the powers already described are active powers, and only one of them can operate at any specific time. Many *gauntlets* sport one or more different magical effects in their reflections and active powers.

Any *gauntlet of Faerglamer* can destroy any of the various *Bigby's hand* spells at a touch (successful attack roll necessary unless the hand is attacking or interposing against the *gauntlet-wearer*). All such *gauntlets* can glow with *faerie fire* as their wearer wills (also having precise and ongoing control of hue and brightness, though such a light can never become blinding bright), and under like urging and control, all such *gauntlets* can emit a *feather fall* effect strong enough to slow a ton of weight (of any combination of living creatures and nonliving items). Any two of these automatic *hand* powers can be in use at once, in addition to the active powers previously described.

The Magister for whom these *gauntlets* are named made hundreds of these items, in a seventy-odd-year career of crafting that made him rich and famous before he became Magister. Many pairs survive to this day, and are often found in unexpected places. It is rumored that certain *gauntlets of Faerglamer* possess additional, secret powers that can only be awakened in very specific situations.

Any sort of M-sized creature with permanent, solid limbs can wear *gauntlets of Faerglamer*. Wearers need not be wizards or spellcasters of any sort, but they cannot be amorphous-bodied or try to wear these *gauntlets* on tails or tentacles, either.

Shimmaryn

XP Value: 2,000 **GP Value:** 10,000

The origin of these curious devices is lost in antiquity. Forever rare and considered more fanciful legend than real, it seems they have always been around, hidden under the robes of a few mages.

Shimmaryn (some sages believe there was once a mortal mage of this name, who may have had something to do with creating the first, or an early, "shimmaryn") are carved lumps of "hardstone" (the massive varieties of gemstone used to carve inlays, statuettes, and similar large pieces). Usually rendered into sleekly curved, quirky designs that are roughly ovoid and fist-sized or larger (a "dragon's egg," for instance: an egg-shaped stone rent with cracks displaying scaly curves, with a draconic eye or dainty head poking out of the largest fissure), shimmaryn must be carried on the body of a being, close to its skin, to be effective. Most owners carry them in secure pouches strapped into crotch or armpit areas, where they are intimate and therefore handy for use, and yet escape most strangers' scrutiny.

Shimmaryn bear a very secret enchantment dubbed "Mystra's handles" by some, because it is a latticework of force that enfolds a tiny dead magic zone and enables the zone to be moved around as if it were a solid gem atop a wand. This enchantment holds and constricts the dead magic so as to keep it from affecting magic even inches away (i.e., elsewhere on the bearer's body, though it can still drain items it directly touches for more than a minute at a time).

By touching the shimmaryn and uttering (a whisper is sufficient) its secret word of activation, a bearer (who need not be a mage, or magically skilled in the slightest) can banish an undesired magical condition already acting on him, or render himself immune to arriving magic. The protection is absolute, banishing all current magic, beneficial as well as harmful, and affecting any number or combination of operating or burgeoning spells.



Shimmaryn function for three rounds at a time, protect only their bearer, and can be called on once per day (that is, any 144-consecutive-turn period) for free. Thereafter, every additional activation in the same day costs the bearer 1 hit point (which can be regained by normal rest or by means of other magic). Moreover, every fourth activation in the same day that the same bearer experiences causes the bearer a 2-round period of *confusion* (as in the spell of the same name) unless successful Strength, Wisdom, and Constitution checks are all made by the bearing character.

Note that a being who reaches out to touch a shimmaryn can call on its power and be considered its bearer even though it is still being carried by another (and may even be still strapped to its body). Uses such beings make of the gem do not count against the original carrier or owner. In other words, if a sneak thief notices the gem on the body of a sleeping man and then calls on its powers to withstand a spell hurled by another, that is his free use of the shimmaryn for the day, but the sleeping man still gets a free use as well.

Shimmaryn cannot be used as offensive weapons to breach *prismatic spheres* or other magical barriers they are hurled into or through, or touched to (though they can banish effects after a round).

Some bearers swear that carrying a shimmaryn gives one dreams of, or dreams sent by, former owners—and a few even say their “magic immunity gem” talks to them, murmuring helpful hints and cryptic utterances alike, in a quiet voice. Most such bearers believe that these gems have distinct personalities, and become more helpful the more kindly bearers are to them—calling on them sparingly, speaking to them as though they were a real person, and intently taking in visions or spoken advice they emit.

Talandor's Helm

XP Value: 5,000 **GP Value:** 25,000

Named for the Magister who devised them while in office, these rare and powerful items take the form of any human-sized metal war-helm, and must be worn by anyone desiring to use one for a complete, unbroken



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day (24-hour or 144-turn period) to establish a link between *helm* and desired user.

Thereafter, the user can establish mental contact with the *helm* whenever desired, over a range of 70 miles. Regardless of its condition or style, a *Talandor's helm* is AC 4, MV Fl 16 (A), and has 66 hp. From afar, its user can see out of it (from any side or angle, but limited in range by his own normal vision, were his head actually where the *helm* is) and speak through it, his voice issuing from the *helm*. The *helm* moves about at its user's mental urging, but movement beyond a 700-mile-radius drift area is tiring, and once the *helm* moves out of its resting area, the link can be maintained at most for a period of 1 turn per point of constitution the user possesses (whereupon an equal period of rest must ensue before the *helm* can be linked to again). This limitation applies even if the *helm* returns to its drift area immediately after straying out of it.

A user operating a distant *Talandor's helm* can walk and talk freely (mentally choosing which utterances are heard both around him and "out of" the *helm*), and perform simple functions or even instant-effect, low-control spell castings, but cannot possibly maintain a *helm* link while fighting, operating another spell requiring ongoing mental supervision, studying magic or anything else, or trying to draw or read a map or any diagram or inscription.

The floating, flying *helm* cannot speak valid, operable incantations, but can deliver touch-delivery spells cast live by its user, elsewhere (if the user is a spell-caster). Each time this is done, the user suffers a temporary loss of 1d2 hit points, regainable through magical

healing or normal rest. The magic is wasted if the *helm* misses on its swooping attack (successful attack roll required, at THAC0 9).

Physical attacks and most magic harm a *Talandor's helm*. Psionic attacks cannot affect the *helm* or its link, and therefore cannot reach the user through the *helm*, or vice versa. Heat- and cold-based attacks harm a *Talandor's helm*, but it is immune to all electrical damage (including violent discharges such as *lightning bolts* and strikes), and is actually healed of any existing damage by *magic missile* spells (damage rolls become gained hit points, but only persist as extra, waiting-to-heal-future-*helm*-damage hit points for 1 turn).

A *Talandor's helm* can deliver two battering attacks per round, of 1-2 hit points damage each (1d4 if it has room for a swoop), and is seldom itself hurt by such activities, due to its own strength and the nature of its animating enchantments. It can also be used to knock, tap, and scrape by its distant user, exactly as powerful in such activities as the user would be if personally present and wielding a hand hammer. Such fighting or tool uses require the user's complete concentration. Simultaneous walking, talking, and similar activity are impossible. A user abandoning a *helm*-link can leave a *Talandor's helm* either resting on a surface or floating motionless (*levitating*) in midair.

This item is often employed to leave a guardian or a spy at a mage's stronghold, treasure cache, or in a place where rivals or foes are known to meet and confer. The *helm* need not be animated for the linked wizard to see, hear, and speak through it. It can remain motionless on a shelf or in the midst of a heap of discarded metal.

The Magisterial Campaign



In campaign play, powerful nonplayer characters who do not spend most of their time offstage tend to dominate play, robbing PCs of a chance to be heroes and their players a chance to enjoy a lot of adventure. The Magister can appear in Realmsplay as one of these "handle with care" NPCs—or, eventually, a player character could become Magister. In either case, the Dungeon Master must give some forethought to the play implications of a Magister actively appearing in the campaign, to avoid having so mighty a figure become mighty dangerous to the future of an enjoyable campaign.

The NPC Magister

Magisters have a duty to disseminate magic to others, and a self-interest in keeping themselves hidden and surrounded with protections, so it is highly unlikely that a wizard who is known to be the Magister would accept apprentices for tutelage or even venture near his former home. But it is possible that a Magister would leave magic where PC wizards could find it or drop in on them (perhaps in disguise or pretending desperation or sickness) to pass on magic.

PCs who by chance blunder too near the abode of a Magister could catch glimpses of a mysterious wizard—or a beast, if the Magister takes the trouble to assume such a shape—spying on them. Wise Magisters seldom do more unless forced to. As the old saying goes, "Blast but lightly. The mage who blasts every buzzing insect one day finds himself lacking blasting spells as he stands in the full sun staring at his enemies. Usually this day comes soon, and always sooner than he hoped."

Seeing a dramatic confrontation between the incumbent Magister and challengers, either a formal duel or in an arranged trap, such as that seen in the novel, *Elminster: The Making of a Mage*, can be an inspiration for the novice wizard, and an introduction to the dangerous intrigues of Thay, the Zhentarim, the Cult of the Dragon, and other dominant powers in the world of sorcery.

Encounters with the wounded survivors of such battles could provide a path for a relatively low-powered PC mage to become the Magister, or provide PC parties with relatively weak foes who might yield some powerful magic or become powerful foes, if they escape alive (something that is all too easy for mages able to *teleport*).

A PC party could stumble upon a cache of spellbooks, scrolls, magical items, or even a sometime-lair of an absent Magister, complete with guardian golems and magic galore, and either make off with a few spells (something most Magisters would ignore, as exposing themselves to take revenge would be to expose themselves to too much danger to make it worthwhile, and because passing magic on by any means stands them in

good stead with Mystra), completely plunder the place and thereby find themselves hunted by a furious Magister (and perhaps caught in the middle of a duel or magical attack when his hunting of them brings him within reach of prepared sorcerous foes of his own), or be caught in the lair by a returning Magister and forced into a duel there and then.

Perhaps a dying Magister desires to keep certain magic from falling into the hands of his conqueror, and is fleeing to buy himself a desperate chance to hide the magic when he comes upon the PCs. The Magister could offer to exchange their paltry magic for his own prior to the arrival of the Magister's pursuers. If the challenger catches up with the Magister in view of the PCs, they could find themselves fleeing from a new and vengeful Magister—or seeing both wizards fall, and perhaps witness Azuth manifest or a shadowstaff be seen, retrieving the magic the Magister sought to protect. It is highly unlikely that the High One would offer the office of Magister to a PC mage in this case, but a dying Magister might try to pass on the office to a nearby PC of like mind and temperament.

Note that trying to keep a Magister captive is a short road to death. As the youthful Elminster saw, few are the magical or mundane restraints that can prevail against a Magister who unleashes his full power. To seek to control when and how the Magister speaks is forbidden by Mystra; she may even personally aid an incumbent Magister in punishing attempts to do so.

In like manner, no wizard of Faerûn dares to pretend to be the Magister, or misrepresent what a Magister has said or done . . . or else that wizard faces a punishment sent by Mystra. Usually this is delivered by a shadow-staff, and might consist of the wizard having to wear beast-shape for a time, or (even worse) being forcibly given and kept in the likeness of the incumbent Magister, but with none of his powers, and placed in a locale where mages eager to challenge the Magister see him. For minor offenses, conferral of a *Laeral's Crowning Touch*, detailed in *Heroes' Lorebook* (TSR #09525), is often deemed sufficient. Local Mystran clergy, and the wizard's master, patron, or tutor, if any, will be informed of the placing of this magical mark.

Short of such fateful events, PCs are not usually aware they are facing the Magister, because all but the most vainglorious Magisters try to keep their status hidden. If one succeeds in posing as a minor mage when dealing with PCs, he may well hire them as his bodyguards or "hands to reach where he dare not," adventuring on his behalf. Magisters are often paranoid, lonely individuals, who are frustrated by the peril involved in carrying out apparently simple errands and deeds. The wisest Magisters value highly adventurers—trusted or not—who can do such things for them. Who



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is better equipped to magically spy on his hireswords, and test such trust as he gives them, but the Magister of Mystra? The possibilities for a Magister-as-patron campaign are only hinted at here.

The PC Magister

It is nothing more than an idle dream—or passing nightmare—to most mages in Faerûn, but Azuth has been known to appear to wizards, without warning, and offer them the position of the Magister. A PC mage could be in the right place at the right time to witness a duel, and become Magister by being near a dying incumbent, or by slaying the weakened victor of that struggle. A PC wizard also could prepare over the passage of much game play to launch a challenge against the Magister, and either succeed, survive the attempt to become an Aspirant Magister and try again, or die in the duel.

What if success does come? Depending on the level of the character and the nature of the players and the campaign, the PC mage could have but a short career as Magister, or his ascendancy could signal the end of the campaign, or the end of the road for that wizard as a player character, with the Dungeon Master taking over the running of the new Magister as an NPC.

Roleplaying the ongoing career of a successful Magister as a PC is ideally suited for one-on-one play between a single player and a DM, but works less well when the Magister is one wizard out of a party of PC adventurers.

The Dungeon Master has the option of forcing a quick defeat on a PC Magister and either offering the character Mystra's Choice or, if he or she had not time to impart magic to others and thus does not qualify to be treated as a true Magister, Mystra could well restore him or her to life and health as a confirmed and favored servant of some other type (which are discussed in the next chapter in this book), or offer him or her another fate of the DM's choosing (resurrection as a priest of Mystra, perhaps, or reincarnation as a weredragon).

In one-on-one play, Mystra's Choice offers a selection of new beginnings for a fallen Magister player character that can be freely chosen without causing the difficulties faced with a group of players.

In either lone-player or group play, the Dungeon Master has the option to encourage the development, through tasks and opportunities (finding or winning spell fragments, and the like), of a life for the Magister that involves creating new magic, and various pursuits for the character that involve spreading magic to others, and even trying to "change things" in Faerûn. If this last glorious goal is accomplished and done well, it will serve as a lasting memorial to the character. Any Magister's career is apt to be punctuated by a series of dangerous duels; the DM should arrange these as an escalating series of challenges for the player. If time presses, NPCs from such sources as the DUNGEON CRAWL® adventure *Stardock* (TSR #09538), the *Heroes' Lorebook*, and the *Villains' Lorebook* (TSR #09552) can be easily adapted and renamed to serve as NPC Aspirant Magister challengers. Such attackers almost always carefully prepare and plan what magic they will hurl, when, and how—and the DM should too.

In one sense, the involvement of the Magister in play as a PC heralds the imminent end of a campaign, or at least of play of the campaign in the style in which it is presently conducted—but properly handled, it can be a refreshing change and a player achievement to be proud of.



The Touched

Mystra has made a bold and significant change from her predecessor's handling of common wizards in recent years. Even lowly wizards now sometimes dream of Mystra, and are reminded by any of her clergy whom they encounter that "Mystra watches over you—and watches you."

No longer is it possible for a mage to ignore the Mother of All Magic and pretend that his power comes from his research, learning, practice, and inspiration alone. A wizard who turns his face from Mystra to embrace other gods must do so deliberately, not in ignorance.

It is the nature of wizards to be fascinated by magic, or they would not pursue such a painstaking, expensive, and dangerous life as that of a mage. The lady goddess who is at the heart of all magic fascinates most mages. Large numbers of them are ambitious and capable mages and have no interest in contesting for the office of Magister, but do covet a special relationship with Mystra, if it is offered.

Now, increasingly (though for the most part in hushed secrecy), it is offered. Mystra does watch "mere mortal" mages, and when she likes what she sees of their character, often extends to them—regardless of their race or primary faith—the chance to be a servant of sorts for short periods of time.

This practice spreads the use and influence of magic, gains Mystra new worshipers, and certainly makes many more mages personally loyal to Our Lady of Spells than hitherto really cared about more than a rapid gain in personal power.

Mystra's offer is always made in private, usually manifesting as a floating, speaking blue radiance, to a mage who is alone and contemplating magic in an old place where strong magic was once unleashed, or one who is handling an artifact or powerful magical item.

Such "Touched" mages gain none of the knowledge of a Chosen, the Magister, or a shadowstaff, only some small power—and their abilities often fluctuate, coming and going randomly.

These powers persist while the mage is carrying out some sort of mission Mystra feeds into his mind—slowly and subtly, often through dreams, but sometimes through such means as a series of successive cryptic inscriptions, left for the mage to find on the pages of magical grimoires he's consulting or even hitherto blank pages of his own spellbooks. The mage's task may be something apparently trivial that furthers one of Mystra's more mysterious aims, or it may involve major repair of the Weave.

A "minor" act might be casting a wild-magic spell into a dead-magic zone, which, if repeated many, many

times (in concert with Weave-repairing work of shadowstaves that the Touched mage would be kept unaware of) would cause the dead-magic zone to grow small indeed. A more major act might involve destroying a potent magical item in a certain manner, at a particular time and place, where the place or getting to it involves danger—a cavern in the very heart of a city of magic-strong, evil drow, for instance.

Touched mages are increasingly undertaking missions that involve them openly in the politics and governance of lands about Faerûn. Some folk hate and fear this (though the very individually tasked nature of Touched mages prevents anyone from seeing such acts as a conspiracy or the work of a single sinister organization), but many who ponder such things both welcome this and see it as a necessary counterweight to the bold moves of the Zhentarim, the Brotherhood of the Arcane, the Red Wizards of Thay, and the mages who belong to other power groups active in the Realms (such as the Cult of the Dragon and the largely hidden Twisted Rune).

When the mission of a Touched mage is fulfilled, his granted powers vanish, but the wizard permanently gains a twofold "touch of Mystra's grace": a minor magical ability usable at will (usually *feather fall* or *light*, which will operate in response to silent acts of will, and which can be called on as often as desired); and a partial immunity (most commonly represented in game terms by a +2 bonus to saving throws) versus a particular school of spells.

Certain individuals, when their mission is fulfilled, miss the powers Mystra gave them. Some of these, who pray to or plead with Mystra (many offer powerful magical items to Mystran temples, in attempts to gain the goddess' attention) and have impressed her sufficiently, may be granted the status of "Pursuivant Arcane" or be made a "weavespinner" (both are detailed later in this chapter).

It's not recommended that Dungeon Masters allow player characters to be Pursuivants Arcane, but both weavespinners and Touched mages can function both in PC parties and in solo-player campaigns, being particularly suited to the latter.

Powers of the Touched

The abilities Mystra grants to the mages she blesses with her Touch take many forms, but always involve a visible manifestation (sometimes a bright flash, sometimes the merest flicker) of the blue-tinged silver fire of Mystra. The Mother of All Magic may grant many such powers to the same mage, but not all at once, or not reliably. Those who serve her most energetically receive in return the greatest granted powers.



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Some of the most common such powers are:

- A warning sensation when hostile magic, or one about to use it, is nearby (usually within a range of 100 yards).
- The occasional appearance in the mind of a Touched mage of a spell unfamiliar to him, and beyond his usual powers, but useful in the current situation, and castable with perfect control, as though he were a veteran in its use (though it's gone for good once cast).
- The dealing of maximum damage by a battle spell cast by the Touched.
- The instant replacement of a cast spell in the mage's memory without the usual need for memorization.
- The occasional ability to hurl a spell without need for material or somatic components, signaled to the Touched mage at the time of need by a sudden surge of magical fire through his mind.
- An automatic, ongoing *spell reflection* protection (of 1d4 specific spells chosen by the Touched; *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, and *magic missile* are popular choices, and it should be noted that *dispel magic* can never be successfully chosen) on the Touched mage.
- The ability to *dimension door* the mage or another being directly touched by the mage, along with all worn or carried items (to a total additional weight of the transported individual's own body weight or less), instantly, by silent act of will, thrice per day, and in addition to the Touched mage's memorized roster.

Pursuivant Arcane

These most secretive of Mystra's servants always work alone and never advertise their status; to do otherwise is almost always to lose that rank on the spot, usually heralded by a reeling, sick feeling, accompanied by a ring of harmless black flames that briefly appear, circle around the being's head in snarling haste, and then fade away.

Pursuivants Arcane are mortal mages who receive a succession of ever-changing powers in addition to the magic all wizards memorize, cast, and create by experiment and practice. They are also given a series of missions (by dream-visions sent by Mystra) that some tackle simultaneously, some drive themselves to accomplish, and others patiently watch for opportunities to fulfill as they live out their lives. Mystra does not seem to mind long-term approaches to the tasks she sets.

The powers of Pursuivants always include the ability to assume *wraithform* (instantly and without casting a spell, the condition lasting up to 3 turns) once a tenday, in addition to their studied and memorized magic. Pursuivants also gain extra spell slots for two divination spells, two slots for defensive or protective magic, and two for attack spells daily.

These "extra" spells are chosen by the wizard only as needed—not selected and memorized beforehand. If the mage needs a *detect magic*, that spell manifests (without actual spellcasting or components) when the mage wills it to, but a *detect invisibility* or an *identify* spell could be chosen instead. Pursuivants using *identify* spells, either as special powers or through normal casting, need no purification time, unlike the 8 hours usually required, but can only examine one item per spell. A Pursuivant can only select spells that he or she already knows as extra spells, and selected spells must be magics for which he or she currently possesses the proper level and alignment to memorize and wield in the normal magely way.

Pursuivants Arcane are also specifically granted the power to attract the attention of Azuth or Mystra to them by calling on the god aloud, or by tracing the symbol of the deity on any surface with a bare finger while silently calling the god to heed. This ability is to be used only to show the deity something of importance in the use of magic, or to witness (and thus seal) an agreement or admission made by a wizard, not to compel the deity to rescue or aid the caller. However, if circumstances would make doing so worthwhile, from the viewpoint of making the use of magic more widespread as opposed to destroying magical material or general freedom to use it, divine aid is often forthcoming. Use of this ability to brag to the deity or to showcase personal accomplishments is less than enthusiastically received.

Aspirant Magister

Mortal wizards and sages sometimes incorrectly call Pursuivants Arcane by the title of "Aspirant Magister," though this term is more properly applied to mages who have openly declared a challenge for the post of true Magister but not yet engaged in a duel (or who have survived a duel but been defeated, and reaffirmed their desire to challenge again).

The mage Lathtolt of Tashluta, for instance, contended forty-three times for the office of Magister in his youth, and is almost certainly the longest-lived Aspirant Magister. (He is currently more than eight hundred years old, a count aided by various *potions of longevity* and enchanted baths of his own devising, and has no interest in lichdom.) Lathtolt is a master of defensive and protective magic, but took many years to learn that one almost never becomes Magister by passively enduring the spells of opponents and hoping to outlast them. He recently admitted that he no longer has any real desire to be Magister.

The Vaeldern family of Halruua, before that lineage became extinct, conferred the title of Aspirant Magister on the most magically powerful child of each generation, for



that child was expected to challenge for the office when he or she felt ready. Too many did so, and died in the trying, for the blood of Vaelder Longspells to persist to the present day. It is not known if any other hereditary Aspirant Magisters are anywhere in Faerûn, but it is certain that there are no recently or currently successful ones.

In elder days, Aspirant Magisters were many, but in recent times, they have been far fewer. The custom nowadays is to contest a duel to the death, and give the incumbent Magister no warning of a challenger's identity, powers, or approach.

Weavespinner

Weavespellers are Mystra's avowed servants. One once described himself as "a wizard with a secret purpose that carries a lot of danger and a hope of reward; no more." Weavespellers are wizards, and function as such, gaining only a fellowship with other weavespellers and a few special powers (described here) by the grace of Mystra.

Weavespellers go through life destroying or diminishing dead-magic zones, discouraging or containing wild magic, recharging magical items, placing spells and minor magical items where they'll soon be found and put into use (the reason for so many "forgotten in plain sight" spellbooks found by adventurers entering tombs and monster lairs down the years), working against those who slay mages, who hoard magical items, and who otherwise seek to deny magic to others, and slaying creatures whose very nature is perilous to wizards: magebanes, magedooms, disenchanters, nishruu, hakeashar, eaters-of-magic, and the like.

Veteran weavespellers host and organize Mage-Fairs, and spread word among wizards of their time and location, though they always serve the formal hosts of a Fair, local Mystran clergy, as behind-the-scenes advisers who also guard the boundaries of the Fair to keep nonmages out.

This exclusivity, decried by both wizards and clergy over the years as antithetical to the "spread of magic for all" aim of Mystra, is allowed by Mystra for two



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reasons. The first is the safety of participating mages and nonmages alike. The former are kept free of impostors, hired slayers, and hostile clergy. The latter are kept far from the perils of angry mages hurling spells and unintended damage from magical demonstrations, disputes, or contacts arising out of their own ignorance of the specifics of magic. This has the added benefit of keeping fear and hatred of magic among nonwizards to a minimum. The second reason is because knowing they are among peers allows mages to make bargains and exchange magic, gossip, and views freely (something Mystra sees as vitally necessary to their careers and hence loyalty to her and continued creativity in magic).

That MageFairs so seldom devolve into magical brawls or transform their surroundings is a credit to the tireless work and vigilance of weavestanders and the Chosen who quietly support them at this or that MageFair.

A weavestander seeks to keep as low a profile as possible (one would never publicly state, "I'm a worker for Mystra!" or anything of the sort) while aiding mages and would-be mages. Unlike Pursuivants Arcane, weavestanders often work together and even have a secret hand-sign of recognition: a fleeting gesture that ends with a brief, animated glow on the gesturing wizard's palm. The seven stars of Mystra appearing and circling (from lower left up and to the right) over her rising flame shows the weavestander's allegiance. The Lady's governance of magic prevents any counterfeiting of this display of her holy symbol, and only clergy and wizards dedicated to her can create it, a manifestation that requires no spellcasting or other cost on their part. Its motes of light can be either harmless, illusory glows or fiery flamelets that do no harm to living beings but can serve to start flammable things burning. Mystran clergy often light braziers with it, to begin a ritual or to impress nonbelievers. Weavestanders have used it to light candles or campfires, and even to burn through ropes that have been used to bind their wrists and keep them captive.

Weavestanders recognize years of experience and power at sorcery within their fellowship, but are in no sense an army with established ranks or any recognition that one mortal wizard can or should give orders to another. Their very flexibility and informality, however, has made them remarkably effective at what they do. Some sages and warriors who hate and fear all wizards believe that weavestanders seek to control the politics of all realms, working against lawful kings and the rule of lineage and sword-law, but such views are mistaken. Mystra's Touched has been dabbling ever more openly in politics and with the rise of sorcerous cabals and rulers (in Thay, for instance), though in an individual

way, one Touched mage doing this task whilst another Touched mage works at another, with a cumulative political effect—but weavestanders do not.

Instead, weavestanders pursue an even-handed approach to striking against restrictions of magic everywhere. Mage-guilds or other organizations that restrict magic use are to be infiltrated and changed (preferably) or destroyed (if need be). Laws that restrict magic use must be stricken (or the lawmakers replaced), Mystran clergy are to be aided when they request it or are beset, and so on. Mage-guilds have their place in guarding and preserving spellbooks, in procuring, storing, and selling magical components, and in providing safe meeting-grounds for mages to discuss problems, impart news, and bargain with other mages for tutoring or guidance. Weavestanders support such things but work against any attempt to deny magic to novices, strangers, and persons of a particular race, gender, or lineage (as opposed to persons known to belong to undesirable groups or with a proven history of destructive behavior).

Weavestanders solve magical mysteries (if a DM desires to provide such) and fight all beings (including other clergy and secular authorities) who seek to restrict magic or who slay mages other than as foes in fair battle. Weavestanders who abandon their duties or tire of the lifestyle can appeal to Mystra to leave her service. This request is always granted, the petitioners promptly becoming normal mages again, losing their weavestander powers, and one experience level (to the midpoint of the experience-point range of the lower level) in the process. Mystra has never granted weavestander status a second time to an individual who has lost it.

All weavestanders can *locate object* at will (20-foot range), can tell roughly how long enchantments have been active in a place or on an item the weavestander touches, and can also tell in a place or on an item if any magic exists that is yet to be triggered.

Weavestanders have the usual chance of an *identify* spell succeeding after they have handled an item for only 1 continuous turn (not used it, spent any more time with it, or devoted any purification time to it).

A weavestander reaching 6th level as a mage gains immunity to all 1st-level wizard spells or similar magical-item effects, priest spells, or spell-like abilities of other beings. At 8th level, a weavestander gains the same immunities to magic of the 2nd-level spells. At 10th level, these immunities advance to encompass 3rd-level magic. A weavestander who attains 12th level as a mage gains immunity to all 4th-level wizard spells and similar effects as above, but Mystra grants him or her no immunities beyond this. Any weavestander can voluntarily waive these immunities at any time on a specific spell-by-spell basis (for instance, to receive the benefits

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of a healing spell), but these exceptions, once made, are permanent.

Upon attaining 24th level as a wizard, a weavespinner gains the ability to pass through all magical wards and fields, unaffected by any ward or field effects. This ability includes antimagic and prismatic barriers.

Weavespinners can recharge magical items in three ways: by using spells as other mages do; by calling on the Weave to transfer power through their own bodies; or by draining magic from an existing source (such as a person with memorized spells, a being with a spell-like ability, or a magical item). A weavespinner doing this must simultaneously touch both the source item and the item to be recharged, and suffers a nonpermanent loss of 2 hit points per charge gained by the item being recharged. Typical rates for such transfers are one charge or one stored spell yields one charge when draining items. Six uses (or as much as can normally be called upon in half a day) of a spell-like power yield one charge, and considering each memorized spell in terms of levels—*fireball*, for instance, yields three spell levels—a charge may be gained at the price of three spell levels. If the harm a weavespinner takes while effecting such a transfer causes unconsciousness or worse, the transfer going on at that moment succeeds, the magic holding the weavespinner rigid until completed, after which the process ends.

Weavespinners have the ability to call on the Weave to *augment* or *inhibit* a specific wizard spell (which they must study and practice altering for a full year before they can use this power reliably on the particular spell). Once they know it, they do not forget it, so a diligent weavespinner can gain these powers over one additional spell with each year that passes.

Augmentation can lengthen duration of spell effects by 1d4+1 rounds; increase a spell's area of effect by 1 cubic foot of space or one target or affected item per wizard level of the weavespinner; or increase damage by 1–2 points (even/odd die roll to determine) per level of the weavespinner. Which *augmentation* occurs is determined by the nature of the spell, or (where a choice is possible) by the desires of the weavespinner.

Inhibition can decrease spell duration by 1d4+1 rounds, to a minimum of 1 round; decrease the area of effect by an item or 1 cubic foot of space per level of the weavespinner, to a minimum of 1, and decrease damage by 1–2 points (even/odd die roll to determine) per wizard level of the weavespinner. Properly used, *inhibition* serves to sharpen the accuracy and effectiveness of magic, not merely to weaken it.

Both *augmentations* and *inhibitions* can be applied only to spells cast by the weavespinner, until the weavespinner attains 20th level as a mage. Thereafter, the weavespinner can act to *augment* or *inhibit* the

already active magic caused or wielded by others, so long as the weavespinner is within physical reach of the area, item, or being affected by the spell (actual contact is not necessary). *Augmentation* or *inhibition* requires concentration. In one round, a weavespinner can cast a spell or govern the conduct of an ongoing magic (guiding an automaton, for example), or work an *augmentation* or *inhibition*. A weavespinner cannot accomplish more than one of those three things in the same round.

To successfully *augment* or *inhibit* magic launched from items or by unwitting or hostile spellcasters, a weavespinner must make both a successful Intelligence check and a successful saving throw vs. spell. Only one spell can be so affected in a round, and the weavespinner can do nothing else (beyond walk in an unhurried manner over fairly clear and level ground) in that round. Defensive magic prepared earlier or already operating on the weavespinner functions normally, as do immunities and the barrier-passing ability, and both *augmentations* and *inhibitions* will work through intervening magical barriers or effects, but the weavespinner cannot cast a spell, activate a magical item, adjust the control of an ongoing magic, or call on any conscious ability (from reading to selecting the right key to open a lock to using his *locate object* power) in the same round as attempting *augmentation* or *inhibition*. A weavespinner can *augment* a spell in one round and *inhibit* it in the next, with instantaneous results, and can switch between increasing and decreasing, but each attempt to influence magic not his own is subject to the Intelligence check and the saving throw. A spell touched by the *augmentation* of one weavespinner and the *inhibition* of another will be unaffected by either. *Augmentations* and *inhibitions* cannot be combined. The more severe or exaggerated desired change will prevail, and the lesser influence will be ignored.

The preferred *augmentations* and *inhibitions* of some typical spells follow:

- *Antimagic shell*: *augment* duration by 1d4+1 rounds or (far more often) spherical area of effect increased by a jutting “finger” of 1 cubic foot, which can be moved around the surface of the shell to any spot the weavespinner desires; *inhibit* duration by 1d4+1 rounds or make the area of effect stationary (either in location of first appearance, or at the spot reached after 1–3 rounds of caster’s movement) or lessened to a minimum of 1 foot out from the caster’s body.
- *Cone of cold*: *augment* damage to 2d4 hp damage per level of caster or area of effect to 6 feet long and 2 feet in diameter per level of caster; *inhibit* damage to whatever precise hit-point amount caster desires, down to a minimum of 1 point per level of the caster or area of effect to any conical extent desired by



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- caster, down to a minimum of 10 feet long and 2 feet in diameter.
- *Dispel magic*: augment chance of *dispel* succeeding by 4 points on the die roll (a +4 bonus) or increase area of effect to a 50-foot cube; *inhibit* effects so as to exclude potions or to affect only beings, only active spell effects, or only enchantments on items, or to reduce efficacy of *dispel*, lowering base chance to 25% (16 or higher roll on 1d20 for *dispel* to succeed).
 - *Fireball*: augment damage done to 1d8 hp per level of caster or retain 1d6/level damage but raise maximum to 12d6 or add penalties to saving throws of -2; *inhibit* area of effect to a 10-foot radius sphere or give +2 bonuses to saving throws or limit damage to 4d6 hp.
 - *Lightning bolt*: augment length (of single bolt only) by up to 20 feet (thus, to 100 feet) or damage to either 1d8 hp per level of the caster or retain 1d6 but increase maximum to 12d6); *inhibit* width or length (of single bolt only) to any dimensions desired, down to a minimum of 1 foot wide and 20 feet long or reduce damage to as little as 1 point per level of the caster.
 - *Magic missile*: augment total possible missiles to six for a caster of 11th or 12th level or seven for a caster of 13th level or greater or damage to 1d4+2 hit



points per missile; *inhibit* damage to 1d4 hp per missile or maximum number of missiles to three or targets to one target creature.

- *Sleep*: augment duration to 1 day/level of caster or range to 60 yards or distance between affected targets to within 90 feet of each other; *inhibit* duration to a maximum of 6 rounds or effects to a single creature.
- *Suggestion*: augment duration by 2 hours per level of caster (rather than 1 hour) or force saving throws against spell to be made at up to a -3 penalty; *inhibit* duration by any desired amount down to 1 hour total or modify saving throws against the spell to be made with up to a +3 bonus.
- *Wall of fire*: augment range to 90 yards or duration up to 4 hours; *inhibit* height of flames to as little as 6 feet or extent to as little as a single 20-foot square or a ring with a radius of as little as 10 feet or lower damage to 1d6 hp to creatures within 10 feet of hot side with no damage to those farther away (no change in "pass-through" damage, however).

Certain Magisters, who observed weavestanders at work, asked them or Mystra as to the source of their powers to alter spells in this manner. In such cases, the Mother of All Magic granted these abilities instantly to the Magister, but she has never imparted them to a Magister who did not ask for them (or at least cast spells in an attempt to learn the source of these abilities, without asking anyone).

The Road of Stars and Shadows



The title of this chapter comes from an ancient ballad describing something almost every Faerûnian has heard of, but almost none of them has seen: the gigantic network of magical *gates* or linked dimensional portals that connect this Faerûnian location with that.

Some of these magical travel-links are death traps; others snatch magic or vitality from their users, or twist them into beast-shapes; still others operate only at certain times or under particular conditions, or require special knowledge to select among an array of destinations.

They were built at many different times and by many different hands—by the Imaskari, the Netherese, older and younger archmages (such as at least one now extinct or at least vanished-to-otherwhere Halruaan family), elven High Mages, and beings visiting Toril from elsewhere. Mystra perceives all the *gates* as distortions in the Weave, and she charges those who serve her (including Magisters and her other mortal servants) to make war on any creatures who seek to control more than two sets of *gates*.

The elves, for example, have gates that leap between Ardeep and Evermeet (the Ardeep terminus was recently moved to a certain bedchamber in Blackstaff Tower in Waterdeep), and between Everska and Evermeet, but will be prevented from controlling—as opposed to using—others. Control, in this case, means any attempt to restrict access to either *gate* terminus, or to capture or harm creatures using the *gate*.

The Zhentarim, the Red Wizards of Thay, certain members of the Brotherhood of the Arcane, and the Malauygrym (commonly referred to as “Shadowmasters”) have all been attacked by Mystra’s agents. Such hostilities persist only so long as the offenders attempt to control *gates*; Mystra has no interest in policing the overall use of magic, or in favoring one power group over another.

Nevertheless, those who live in hatred and fear find it hard to think in other ways, or to judge others except by their own standards. Therefore, these covert struggles flare up repeatedly, as Zhents, zulkirs, or Malauygrym seek to seize exclusive control of a *gate* once more.

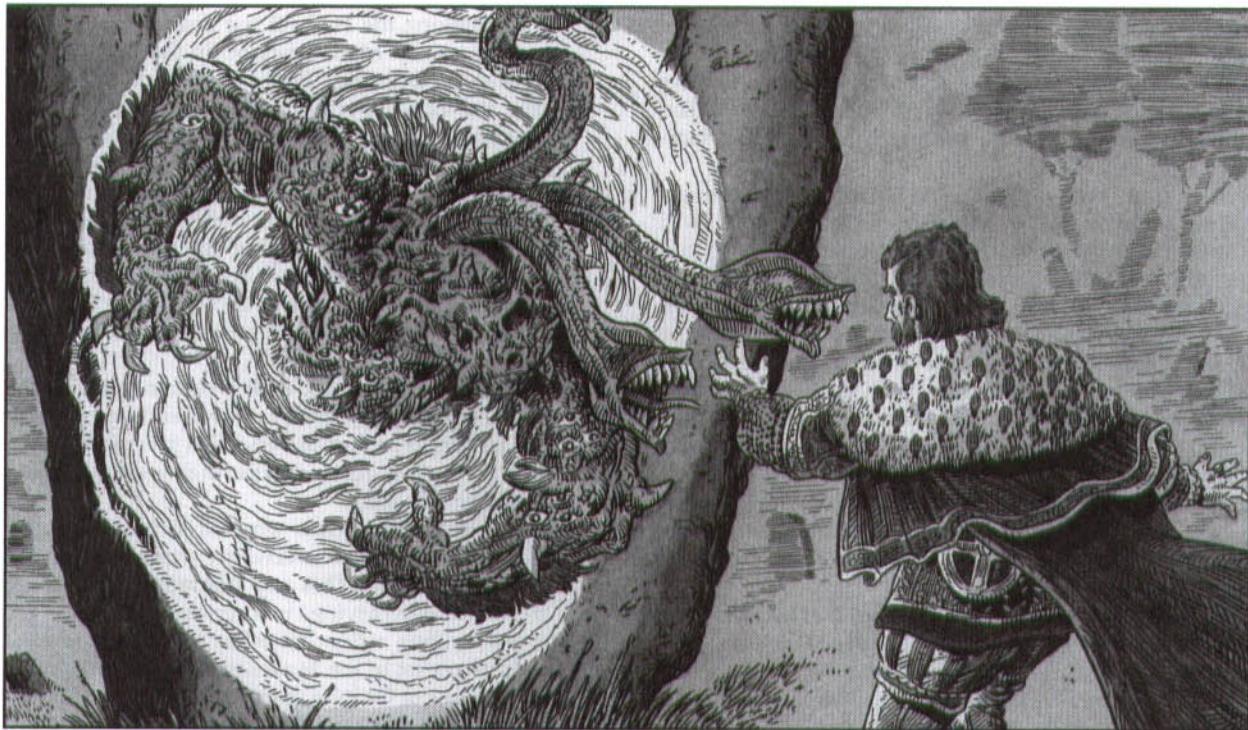
Any Faerûnians who launch a wholehearted investigation into more than one pair of *gates* attract the attention of Mystra’s agents, who have instructions to do what is necessary to keep knowledge of the *gates* meager, and to prevent anyone daring to move an army or caravan through one. Bands of a dozen beings, their mounts, and pack animals are the tolerated limit; larger forces always meet with magical catastrophe.

It is far beyond the scope of this work to offer even a representative list of *gates* in Faerûn, with their various physical keys or triggering incantations or cautions, but here are a few that have come to recent notice:

- A *gate* linking the Halls of the Beast-Tamers in the heart of ruined Myth Drannor (in the Dragonreach Dalelands) with the “First Level” of Undermountain, the vast, labyrinthine subterranean complex beneath Waterdeep. This pair is sometimes called “the Mirror Gates” or “the Myth Drannor Road.” No known keys or means of activating the *gate* exists.
- Dozens of “short-hop” *gates* within Undermountain are known of. Those linking the uppermost two main levels with each other and with surface alleys and cellars are most widely known, but at least one links with a sealed-off dungeon level under Castle Waterdeep.
- A *gate* linking Berdusk with a certain glade in the High Forest northwest of Loudwater. Watched over by Harpers at its Berdusk end, this *gate* is habitually used by the Heralds to shorten their journeys to and from their Holdfast.
- A *gate* linking a certain wooded lot on the southeastern outskirts of Neverwinter with a cave on the isle of Orlumbor. This *gate* operates by touching crescent-moon carvings in a certain order.
- A *gate* linking a flooded cellar in Thentia (on the northern coast of the Moonsea) with a stable in the back streets of Ordulin (capital of Sembia). This *gate* operates by uttering the proper command word while standing in a particular spot.
- A *gate* linking a small, nameless Pirate Isle in the Sea of Fallen Stars with a rocky ridge south of Westgate. This *gate* operates by carrying an unsheathed bladed weapon through a gap between two otherwise unremarkable boulders.
- A *gate* linking Mirt’s Mansion (in Waterdeep) with the midden-heap of The Sleeping Dragon inn in Rassalantar. This *gate* is rumored to be much used by the stout Waterdhavian moneylender for smuggling, or at least for unheralded arrivals and departures from the City of Splendors.
- A *gate* linking the top of Old Skull knoll in Shadowdale with a certain unmarked spot on the shores of the Wyvernwater, near Immersea (in Cormyr). This *gate* operates only when users possess a key (a specific enchanted token) that resembles a rusty old lantern. The soldiers of Shadowdale maintain a watchpost atop the Old Skull that is always manned in force, but they are unaware of the existence of the *gate*.
- A *gate* linking the vast, ruined stone city known as the Many-Windowed Tower (said to be haunted by wizshades or the ghosts of wizards) with a certain circle of stones in Spiderhaunt Wood.
- A *gate* linking a certain flooded room in a ruin on one of the islands of Marsemb (in Cormyr) with a cave in the Firesteap Pass, on the Golden Road at



The Road of Stars and Shadows



the easternmost end of the Lake of Steam. This *gate* operates only when the correct tune is sung, hummed, or played on an instrument.

- A *gate* linking the monster-haunted ruins of Elbulder (on the Old Road, where it crosses the River Arran) with a tomb-knoll in the Marsh of Chelimber. This *gate* operates when users carry obsidian, jet, or certain black gemstones. It is referred to as "Black Star Gate" in an old lorebook kept at Candlekeep.
- A *gate* linking a turret-top room in Athkatla (in Amn) with a wharfside warehouse in Iriaebor (on the Dragon Coast). Its operation requires the casting of a particular spell.

There is also a persistent legend from down the centuries of a *gate* (perhaps one of those listed above, perhaps not) that affords users who possess a certain enchanted key access to a hidden stronghold, locked away in solid stone somewhere in Faerûn, that can be entered or left only by means of the key, during an otherwise instantaneous trip from one *gate* to the other. More than one adventuring band used this stronghold as its home, but at least one such band was somehow hunted down in the stronghold and slaughtered by foes who may yet remain there.

The servants of Mystra do not discourage mages from using *gates* they discover—but they do send such wizards recurring dream-visions and even lore-scrolls (often magically altered to look old) that impart dire warnings about spreading word of *gates*, or taking more than a few beings through them at a time.

Those who serve Mystra do spy on users of *gates*, and would act against anyone who tried to build a wall or fortress around an existing *gate*. They would not strike at someone who merely purchased a building in which a *gate terminus* exists, even if the structure is then inhabited and kept locked. If, however, someone uses the *gate* to the surprise of the new owner and that owner subsequently hires guards or builds barriers to make subsequent use of the *gate* more difficult, the servants of the Lady would act. Magisters are normally not drawn into such conflicts, but at any time Mystra might charge a Magister with a simple mission (usually "blast such-and-such a tower, laying bare but not harming the stone throne in its aft hall," wherein the throne is a *gate terminus*).

One Magister, called "the Opener," studied the gates of Faerûn as his personal project, and is known to have crafted a map, complete with detailed instructions for use, of many *gates*. Mystra has hidden this from later Magisters, but not destroyed it.

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EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 2031
2600 Berchem
Belgium
+32-70-23-32-77

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